THE LIFE OF LORD STRATHCONA AND MOUNT ROYAL

BECKLES WILLSON

On the following pages of Major Beckles Willson's "Biography of Lord Strathcona and Mount-Royal" there appear certain direct and indirect references to the undersigned.

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Encl. O. B. R. Mac Farlane.

Extract from Secretary Thomas Fraser's letter to Chief Factor George Barnston and others.

"In reply, I am directed to inform you that the first sale of the "Fur Trade" Lands was in 1853. Since that period, Sales have been effected every year down to 1861 inclusive; with the exception of 1857, when there were no sales; and the proceeds of such Sales, have invariably been carried to the credit of the "Fur Trade," for the Outfit during which the Sales were effected."

THE LIFE OF LORD STRATHCONA

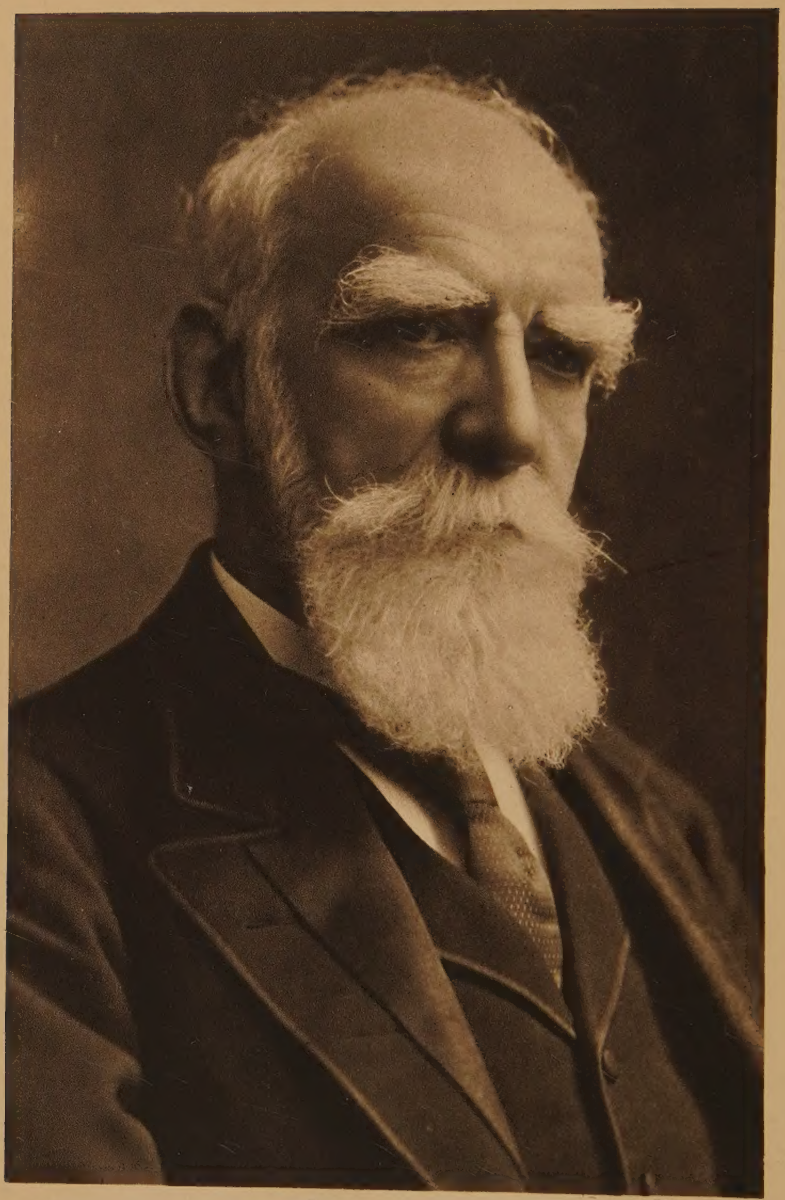

Photo Lafayette

Strathcona

THE LIFE OF LORD STRATHCONA & MOUNT ROYAL

G.C.M.G., G.C.V.O.

(1820-1914)

BY

BECKLES WILLSON

WITH SIXTEEN FULL-PAGE PHOTOGRAVURES

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Should Canada arise and ask herself
Who gave her unity, peace, wealth and strength;
What fearless warrior or statesman wise
Moulded her destiny, with pious hand,
For noble purpose and for lofty aim:
Methinks I find her answer here
On this broad brow and on these features firm
That fourscore and ten years have left unscathed,
Fit temple of a mind to honour given.

PREFACE

THAT this book, written amidst the distractions of war, in the shadow of the armoury, to the sound of marching men, as Canada drills and sends forth her sons to the greatest conflict in history, should relate the long life of one whose concern was wholly and markedly with peace, may seem an irony of circumstance.

But, in truth, its appearance is far from inopportune. Had Lord Strathcona's particular genius tended in any other direction, Canada would not now have been opulent and strong and heartened for the fray which is to decide the fate of the British Empire. To him, more than to any other man, is due Canada's material prosperity and much of her political temper.

The way was prepared, and he died on the very eve of the ordeal.

In undertaking the task I have examined letters and documents relating to several historical episodes, in which Lord Strathcona took a part, more closely than heretofore. The result has been to bring about a considerable revision of judgment; and now that all the principals in the Red River insurrection of 1869 have passed away, it is possible for me to relate the story a little more ingenuously than my predecessors. Sir John Macdonald, Joseph Howe, William McDougall, William Mactavish, and Louis Riel have already passed into history, and I sincerely trust there are no lingering susceptibilities to wound or prejudices to exasperate.

Preface

There used to be much heated discussion as to the "complicity" of the Hudson's Bay Company's officers in the outbreak led by Riel at the time of the transfer to Canada of Rupert's Land. As my narrative shows, if the part of the officers was passive, it was in consequence of the very unjust behaviour towards them by the London Board. The officers were asked to extinguish a conflagration in a house from which they had been ejected, and the proposal did not fill them with enthusiasm. Lord Strathcona came eventually to be fully aware of all the facts, but circumstances made it, in his opinion, impolitic for him to speak. For me, however, the circumstances are different, and I state the case quite plainly. I feel, too, that the time has come to speak plainly about the Hudson's Bay Company's relations with the wintering partners. This again is a matter which Lord Strathcona's loyalty to tradition made him disinclined to discuss or even to contemplate—although he was under no delusion as to facts or tendencies.

The testimony which I here present hardly exhibits in a favourable light the conduct of the London Board and shareholders towards the vested interests of the wintering partners who had coalesced with them as equals in 1821, but who, as my narrative makes clear, were slowly and craftily deprived of their heritage. As Donald A. Smith used to remind his fellow officers, the North-West Company, which was one of the two parties to the famous coalition, and of which all the great fur-trading pioneers were members, was Canadian in origin, its *personnel* being chiefly Scottish and French-Canadian.

That one who has been described as a panegyrist of the Hudson's Bay Company should now attack it may appear invidious. But apart from what I conceive to be my simple duty, a distinction must be drawn. The Company, founded

in 1667 and amalgamated with the North-West Company in 1821, ceased in the strict historical sense to exist when it surrendered its Charter in 1870. The continuity was already interrupted when it was sold to the International Financial Society in 1863. This latter transaction was carried out by a Governor and Committee without the privity of the wintering partners. The latter unanimously expressed their disapproval, but it was then too late. The Governor and Committee had disappeared; Sir George Simpson was dead; his successor, A. G. Dallas, refusing any further odium, had resigned; the officers were widely sundered, and their only spokesman at this critical juncture, William Mactavish, was stricken by a mortal illness. Such were the circumstances when Donald Smith emerged from obscurity, when the revamped London Corporation hastened to sell to Canada its territorial rights over lands not wholly its own. It is a melancholy tale, this triumph of the London shareholders over the wintering partners. More than once did Lord Strathcona intervene to temper the shareholders' rapacity, but, as he came to see when eventually he secured a controlling interest in the concern, any scheme of reconsideration and restitution must be personal with himself—a quixotic project, involving incidentally an aspersion on the memory of his former superiors. He contented himself, therefore, at last with giving each of the old surviving factors a pension in his will.

Again, I trust my narrative will dispel a little of that web of mystery which has so long enveloped Donald Alexander Smith's personal antecedents and many of his most notable actions. For something of this mystery, he himself, it must be admitted, was—whether involuntarily or by design—responsible. His was not a nature to shun the light when it was honest daylight: but when the vulgar

bull's-eye of publicity sought out his private life he withdrew into deeper obscurity; and in consequence he always showed, as Lord Aberdeen remarked, "a reticence regarding his personal experiences and a dislike to recording his own performances." Self-revelation was not one of his talents; he did not wear his heart upon his sleeve. If he permitted legends to accumulate, which a timely disavowal would have shattered, it may be that their currency appealed to his sense of humour.

The sources of my information are far too numerous for me here to specify in full, but it were ungrateful not to return public acknowledgment to some who have given me generous and most valuable assistance. His daughter, Baroness Strathcona and Mount Royal, has from the first taken a deep interest in the work, as have the co-executors, Mr. John W. Sterling and Mr. James Garson. I acknowledge also the courteous help of his two nieces, Mrs. Grant, of Forres, and Miss Margaret Smith, of Edinburgh; his cousins, Mrs. Cantlie, of Montreal, and Mrs. Lewis, of Belfast; of Mr. James Hardisty Smith, and of Mrs. Ross Robertson, of Montreal.

For the chapters relating to Hudson's Bay Company affairs, I am specially indebted to Messrs. Roderick MacFarlane, Colin Rankin, W. D. B. Ross, and to Mr. William Armit, formerly Secretary of the Company. For copies of the official correspondence in Lime Street, I am beholden to my friend, Sir Thomas Skinner, the present Governor of the Hudson's Bay Company, who, I hasten to add, is in no sense a party to the misdeeds of the original body corporate. Dr. Arthur Doughty, C.M.G., the Dominion Archivist, has also helped me ungrudgingly, as have many other public officials at Ottawa. My especial thanks are due to Sir Wilfrid Laurier for entrusting to me unreservedly the whole

of his copious private and official correspondence with the late High Commissioner; also to his predecessor, Sir Charles Tupper, Bart., and to Sir Robert Borden, who treated me with a like generosity. Of published sources I must mention here but two—Sir Joseph Pope's very able but still incomplete *Memoirs of Sir John A. Macdonald,* and Messrs. Shortt and Doughty's valuable compilation, *Canada and Its Provinces.* To the Canadian Pacific Railway Company an acknowledgement is due for kind permission given to reproduce some of the pictures that illustrate the book.

To the last I leave the name of my chiefest inspirer and counsellor, the late Sir William Cornelius Van Horne, K.C.M.G., whose zeal for the memory of his friend, and whose rare knowledge of Lord Strathcona's work and aims, have helped to smooth many of the rough, and illumine several of the obscure stages in the journey.

Beckles Willson.

Windsor, Nova Scotia.
October, 1915.

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THE LIFE OF LORD STRATHCONA

CHAPTER I

EARLY DAYS (1820-38)

IF ancient Morayshire is one of the most interesting districts of the Scottish Highlands, Forres is unquestionably the most interesting spot in the shire. The wild and barren heaths in the neighbourhood boast an abiding renown in the pages of Shakespeare. They furnish several of the principal scenes in the tragedy of *Macbeth*. Indeed, it was on the sterile and desolate tract in the neighbourhood known as the Hard Muir—still a "blasted heath," as described in the play—that Macbeth first met the "weird sisters," who, with their greeting, "All hail, Macbeth, that shalt be king hereafter!" awakened the fearful ambition that led him to wade through blood to a throne and perdition:

> How far is't call'd to Forres? What are these
> So wither'd, and so wild in their attire,
> That look not like the inhabitants o' the earth
> And yet are on't?

In Forres, the visitor is still shown the site of the royal palace, where Macbeth at his coronation drank to the health of the absent Banquo, and saw seated in a chair vacant to all the rest of the company the ghost of the comrade he had caused to be slain by hired assassins.

The county of Elgin, as Morayshire is now known, is bounded on the north by Moray Firth and on the south by the picturesque mountain scenery of Inverness. Through the county flow three streams—the Spey, the Lossie, and

the Findhorn—all prolific in salmon, and all remarkable for the romantic charm of their valleys; while, in the beautiful little lochs, dotted over the pleasant region and forming the source of several streams, tributary to the main rivers, trout are abundant.

Lost is the knowledge of when Forres became a royal burgh. All old charters have vanished, but according to an oft-quoted verse of one of Scotia's minstrels,

> Forres, in the days of yore,
> A name 'mang Scotia's cities bore,
> And there her Judges o'er and o'er
> Did Scotland's laws dispense;
> And there the Monarchs of the land
> In former days held high command,
> And ancient architects had planned,
> By rule of art in order grand
> The royal residence.

And here at Forres was born Donald Alexander Smith, destined later to become the first Baron Strathcona. At the time of his birth, Forres contained about 3,500 souls; but it had formerly been far more populous, and of greater consequence than the county town of Elgin.[1]

Lord Strathcona was always very fond of the place. When receiving the Freedom of the town in 1910, he said:

My affection has always gone forth to this town of Forres and its beautiful surroundings. Is there another town or city which has anything more interesting or more beautiful? Let us take the Cluny Hill; let us take the banks of the Findhorn, Sluie, and Randolph's Leap; that interesting memorial to the great naval hero, Nelson; the "blasted heath" or the Culbin sands. While speaking of this it strikes me that certainly there is a resemblance between this and another city with which I have been intimately connected. Here you have as the background Cluny Hill, and in the face of you Findhorn and the placid Mosset; and in that town to which I refer—in Montreal—you also have a background of a beautiful mountain, and before it the broad, flowing St. Lawrence.

[1] The word *Forres* derived from two Gaelic vocables—*far uis*, near water—is a name singularly appropriate to its position. The little village of Findhorn was the port of Forres, as Leith is the port of Edinburgh. The importance of both the one and the other is now unhappily a thing of the past.

The comparison is certainly a curious one; and it loses nothing in its suggestiveness by a reminder that the patron saint of Forres was none other than St. Lawrence!

The future Lord Strathcona was born on the 6th of August, 1820. The house, demolished a few years ago to make room for local improvements, closely adjoined the two-arched bridge spanning the swiftly flowing stream, or burn, of the Mosset, which, mingling with the broader waters of the Findhorn, empties into the estuary of Moray Firth. It was a simple but solid structure, tenanted latterly by lowly folk, but considered a century since as suitable for the home of a middle class family.[1]

Two years before the event just recorded, there came to dwell in Forres a couple from the neighbouring district of Strathspey. The husband, Alexander Smith, of Archiestown, was a character in his way, and, by all accounts, offered a strong contrast to both his sons. He was volatile, fond of song and a convivial glass, a cheerful companion, but with few of those stable qualities needed to make his way in the world. His forbears, the Gows or Smiths, were long settled in the parish of Knockando, and there is frequent mention of them in the old Morayshire records. One George Smith—believed to have been Alexander's grandfather—was out in the '45, and was famous for his strength and courage. He afterwards served with Clive in India.

Alexander's mother was a Grant—a fact of great significance in the career of his descendants.

It was in 1810, and when in his twenty-ninth year, that Alexander Smith, after several tentative efforts at soldiering and farming, set up as a merchant in Grantown, and soon afterwards met and won Barbara, the daughter of Donald

[1] "People," Lord Strathcona said in his old age, "speak of that stone cottage on the Mosset as if it were a very lowly dwelling indeed; but compared to any house I dwelt in until I came to Montreal in my forty-eighth year, it was almost a palace. It was of stone, and substantially built, with very thick walls."

Stuart, of the Manor of Leth-na-Coyle (Lainchoil), in the neighbouring parish of Abernethy.[1] The young lady's mother was Janet, the daughter of Robert Grant of Cromdale.

* * * * * *

All this wild district of Strathspey had been peopled exclusively by the Grant clan, and for so long a period that few landowners held possession there who did not bear the name of Grant. When, about the middle of the eighteenth century, Baron Grant of Elchies proposed to sell his estates in Strathspey, Sir Ludovick Grant was anxious to secure them, either for himself or for one of the clan. In a letter, still extant, to his law agent, he wrote that he wished to preserve "all the lands between the two Craigellachies in the name of Grant."

Conspicuous throughout Strathspey are these two rocky eminences. The upper or western Craigellachie forms the dividing boundary between Badenoch and Strathspey, and was the rendezvous of the Grant Clan in time of war. The lower height stands at the confluence of the Fiddich with the Spey, and forms the point of contact of the parishes of Aberlour, Knockando, Bothes, and Boharm. The upper Craigellachie is commonly believed to have furnished the crest of the Grant family, which is a mountain in flames. When the chief wished the clan to assemble, fires were kindled on both Craigellachies, hence the name "Rock of Alarm." The war cry of the clan was "Stand fast, Craigellachie," and this was the legend on their armorial motto. We shall have occasion later to note a pleasant, dramatic touch, worthy of one of the old minstrels, in the

[1] Donald Stuart, of Lainchoil, had four sons, John, Peter, Robert, and William. Peter joined the army, but retired with the rank of lieutenant, and became Fort Major of Belfast. He had a large family. William went to London, and in the course of time entered, writes his grand-niece, Mrs. Lewis, "a very select and small woollen business in the West Country. The firm was called Bevan and Stuart. He had no sons but two daughters, who were lost sight of in the course of time.

"Of the several daughters of Donald Stuart, the youngest was Margaret, who, when about twenty or twenty-two, left on a voyage to some distant connections in the Orkneys. The ship was lost and all on board were drowned."

recurrence of this Grant slogan in the epic of one of their descendants.

The Stuarts (or Stewarts) were also considerable folk in the countryside; so that, on the whole, the match was a most advantageous one for Alexander Smith. Two of Barbara Stuart's brothers had gone in the service of one of the great fur-trading companies then striving for ascendancy in North America. Another brother was in the army, and two cousins were in the East Indies. The case of the Stuarts, for fifty years or more, was typical of the emigration which had been going on in Strathspey.

"Our parish," wrote the Rev. Dr. Forsyth, minister of Abernethy, "has continued to give some of its best blood to other lands. We have sent bankers to England, farmers to Ireland, and parsons to every county in the Highlands. We have sent settlers to Canada and the United States, shepherds to Fiji, stock-keepers to New Zealand, gold-diggers to Australia, diamond merchants to Africa, doctors to the Army and Navy, and soldiers to fight our cause in all parts of the world."

What was true of Strathspey was true of the whole shire.

Men from Moray, testified Lord Strathcona at a somewhat later date, were to be found in all parts of the world. In Canada there were many of them doing their part nobly in extending, in building up, and in consolidating that great Empire of which they were all so proud—and he believed if there was one thing more than another that helped the people of Scotland, it was that in days gone by they had had a better system of education than exists in any other part of the world.[1]

* * * * * *

The courtship of Alexander Smith and Barbara Stuart proved to be a long one. They were not married until 1813.

[1] Speech at eighty-first anniversary of the Edinburgh Morayshire Club, January 20th, 1905.

After their marriage and the birth of a daughter, Margaret, the Smiths removed to the town of Forres, where two sons were born. The elder was christened John Stuart, after a famous uncle, of whom we shall have frequent occasion to speak; and the younger, destined to be the future financial statesman and philanthropist, was given the maternal and paternal family names of Donald Alexander.

Two at least of Mrs. Smith's relatives were already at Forres: James Stuart, who was studying law in the office of Mr. Webster, the Town Clerk,[1] and Mr. Cumming, of Logie, who dwelt in a picturesquely situated place near Forres, on the banks of the Findhorn. The surrounding scenery is very beautiful, and even in Donald Smith's childhood there were said to be more country gentlemen's seats in the immediate neighbourhood than in any other part of the country.

Barbara Stuart was a comely woman, of strong, quiet character, and simple piety. Her son, in his old age, often reverted to the lessons she had taught him—lessons of gentleness and patience and conduct. "Her voice was low, and she disliked loud noises. She was not nervous, but if a door slammed or a heavy object fell, she closed her eyes with a smile as of suppressed pain. She set great store by courtesy and good manners, and our bonnets were always off in her presence. She insisted on scrupulous cleanliness in house, person, and apparel, and herself set an example of perfect neatness in dress."[2]

[1] My grandfather Stuart had been apprenticed as a lawyer in Forres, and his fellow-apprentice, Webster, sat as member for the town of Aberdeen in the same Parliament as that in which I first sat. I have heard my grandfather relate that he learned to write in the soft peat ashes in his father's house. His father lived in the neighbourhood of Forres at Broom hill. My grandfather rode from Forres to Edinburgh on a Highland pony, and sold it when he got to Edinburgh, and began housekeeping on the proceeds. He was articled to a Mr. Gordon, who soon after had a paralytic stroke, after which Mrs. Gordon and my grandfather carried on his business. Many years later, when I was an undergraduate at Cambridge, I visited her at Shelford, when she spoke of my grandfather as "Little Sandy Stuart." My grandfather remembered when all the Judges and barristers rode on horseback to the Circuit Court of Inveraray. —James Stuart, M.P., *Reminiscences.*

[2] Donald A. Smith to Robert Hamilton, 1874.

His Mother's Teaching

Mrs. Smith was a regular reader of the Bible and of Scottish divines, and it was at her knee that Donald learnt at a very early age many of those metrical versions of the Psalms so dear to the north, one of which he repeated "without error, pause, or confusion" on his death-bed nearly ninety years later.

The memory of these paraphrases, learnt in childhood, was often with him. Once, in middle life, while ill in Newfoundland, he told the friend who nursed him,[1] that he had spent the whole of one night recalling dozens of stanzas, and another in repeating passages of Livy's history, and found that, while more recent acquirements had faded away, these he could recall with ease.

To one of his guests at Glencoe,[2] when the conversation turned on the question of public speaking, Lord Strathcona remarked that on one occasion, when he was unexpectedly called upon to respond to the toast to himself, there came into his head the following paraphrase, which he straightway repeated and which was received by the audience with very marked appreciation:

O happy is the man who hears
Instruction's warning voice,
And who celestial wisdom makes
His earthly only choice.

For she has treasures greater far
Than east or west unfold,
And her rewards more precious are
Than all their stores of gold.

In her right hand she holds to view
A length of happy days;
Riches, with splendid honours join'd,
Are what her left displays.

[1] Captain Nathan Norman.
[2] The Hon. Thomas McKenzie, High Commissioner for New Zealand.

She guides the young with innocence
In pleasure's path to tread;
A crown of glory she bestows
Upon the hoary head.

According to her labours rise,
So other rewards increase;
Her ways are ways of pleasantness
And all her paths are peace.

The Smiths were by no means blessed with this world's goods. Poverty, however, is a relative term. As a matter of fact, the Smiths were no poorer than a large number of their intelligent countrymen at that period who led regular, contented, and respectable lives on a fraction of what English folk of the same class thought indispensable. Still, to have educated their sons at a private school would undoubtedly have been quite beyond their means.

Even then education at a private school was expensive. Happily, a resource had lately been established in the town. One Jonathan Anderson, a native of Forres, who, like many of his neighbours, had wandered afar and acquired a small fortune, bequeathed, some years before Donald's birth, the lands of Cowlairs, now forming part of the city of Glasgow, for the purpose of creating a school and paying a teacher at Forres. His wish was that the children of necessitous parents in his native parish and those of Rafford and Kinloss should be "instructed in reading, writing, arithmetic, and such branches of education as the Provost, Magistrates, and Town Council should deem proper."

The Anderson Institution, a building in the Grecian style, was erected in 1824, and both John and Donald became amongst the earliest pupils. The latter's youthful traits at that time were those appropriate to his later character. A fellow pupil who remembered him describes him as of a shy, proud, patient disposition, but with a fund of sturdy resolution and even hardihood when occasion

demanded it. When Donald was nine years old, the rivers Findhorn and Spey broke their boundaries and flooded the country. Many of the peasant folk with their families came into Forres to seek relief, and among them the parents of one of Donald's childish playmates, who was drowned. After school Donald called on the bereaved family, and " with a gravity far beyond his years, condoled with them, and on leaving begged that they would accept a slight token in memory of his friend. He handed them over all of his pocket-money, amounting to a shilling and some odd coppers." Thus was the child father to the man.

The master of this institution of learning professed to be a great Shakespearean scholar, and was especially fond of quoting *Macbeth*.[1] His father had met Dr. Johnson on his Scottish itinerary, and naturally cherished a large number of anecdotes of that illustrious man, which he bequeathed to his descendants. As these were retailed to the school on all possible occasions, the pupils might have been forgiven for sometimes confusing the itinerant lexicographer with the royal murderer, as was actually done on one occasion by a boy named Robertson.

The pupils of the school were allowed as a great treat to ascend the Nelson Tower; and Robertson, one of the biggest boys at Anderson's, who did so for the first time, was greatly struck by the view.

" Look! " he cried, " yon is where Dr. Johnson killed Banquo."

[1] " He was very severe," Lord Strathcona once recalled, " on southern ignorance in pronouncing Dunsinane with the accent on the last syllable, and always quoted the famous passage as ' Till Birnam forest to Dunsinnan come.'

In his *Reminiscences* Mr. James Stuart relates the following anecdote told by his grandfather and namesake of Forres:

" Mrs. Siddons was brought to play in Edinburgh, principally by the intervention of a certain Lord of Session, called Lord Dunsinane. She played Lady Macbeth. At the point where Macbeth refers to the old prophecy, ' Till Birnam forest come to Dunsinane,' the words were markedly altered, ' Till Birnam forest to Dunsinane come '—with the accent on the second syllable, Shakespeare's pronunciation of the word being wrong. It was generally recognised that the change was at the instigation of Mrs. Siddons. Lord Dunsinane was present, and the incident pleased the Scottish people very much, and brought down the house in prolonged applause."

Such an exhibition of crass ignorance was received by the group in silence, prompted by a wholesome dread of Robertson's temper. But it was more than Donald could stand; he laughed Robertson to scorn, until the latter became incensed and threatened a thrashing. Donald stood his ground manfully, as he afterwards stood it in fur-trading camp and the halls of legislation, and the threatened thrashing did not take place.

Certain holidays were spent at Findhorn and Abernethy, and upon these vacations Donald and his brother looked back with pleasure. But it was in the society of his elder sister, Margaret, that Donald's happiest hours were spent. She appears to have been a most attractive girl, with rare qualities of both head and heart. In one of his letters her uncle, John Stuart, with whom she is said to have been a great favourite, asked if " Maggie's golden curls are as lustrous and her face as bonny as ever? "

Margaret had a great ambition to excel in study. This ambition was probably foiled by the scant opportunities then existing for female education. None the less, the desire was very strong; and when, nearly half a century after her death, her brother John suggested that it was a thought of Margaret that had inspired his brother to found a great college for women in Montreal, Donald replied : " You are quite right in thinking that, in the matter of this college, the memory of our sister Margaret was present in my mind. You well remember her gifts and her ambition to become a scholar."

Mrs. Smith had for very many years continued to receive long and interesting letters from her only surviving brother, the daring fur-trader, who now began to speak of returning home from the distant wilds of the North American continent.

In the cottage at Forres, we are told, hung a water-colour drawing of Stuart Lake. This great body of water, fifty miles long, and dotted with islands, situated amidst

the wild and majestic mountain scenery of New Caledonia, had been named in John Stuart's honour, for in 1808 he had been the intrepid companion of Simon Fraser in that series of explorations which revealed to the world the long hidden marvels of the vast fertile country on the Pacific side of the continent, which is to-day known as British Columbia.[1]

These exploits of John Stuart, who is frequently mentioned in Washington Irving's *Astoria,* his travels, his adventures, and his friends were naturally the chief pride of the family. What wonder if that sketch of the remote Stuart Lake, " gemmed with islands and girt with mountain masses and primeval forests," told of an enchanted region to his small nephew, Donald Smith?

After his participation in the Astoria events of 1813, John Stuart frequently changed his station, and after the famous Coalition of 1821, became Chief Factor at Lesser Slave Lake. In the Indian country he married a half-breed girl, but she soon died, leaving him an only son, whom he placed at school in London.

Robert Stuart, another of Mrs. Smith's brothers, was also in the service of the North-West Company, and also celebrated for his courage and ability. His death was tragic. Sailing down the Columbia River one day, his canoe was upset, and he and his three companions were flung into the water. A temporary refuge was furnished by a

[1] " In comparing these two persons I should call Stuart the nobler, the more dignified man, but one whose broad, calm intellect had received no more culture than Fraser's. Stuart's courage and powers of endurance were equal in every respect to those of his colleague, and while in temper, tongue, ideas, and bodily motion he was less hasty, within a given time he would accomplish as much or more than Fraser, and do it better. Both were exceedingly eccentric, one quietly so, the other in a more demonstrative way ; but it happened that the angularities of one so dovetailed with those of the other that co-operation, harmony, and good fellowship characterised all their intercourse. Stuart was one of the senior partners of the North-West Company, and for a time was in charge of the Athabasca Department. As his territory on the west was boundless he deemed it his duty to extend the limits of his operations. Twice he traversed the Continent, besides multitudes of minor excursions. In fact, he was almost always on the move. On retiring from the service he settled at Forres, Scotland, where he died in 1846."—Anderson's *North-West Coast,* MS., quoted by Bancroft.

rock, but Stuart was the only swimmer of the four, and was, therefore, the only one to whom the others could turn for assistance. "He bade them be of good cheer—that, if God permitted, he would save them. Then, taking one of them on his back, he struck out for the shore. His enterprise was successful so far as the first and second were concerned; but his further efforts to save the third man cost him his life. His strength had ebbed, and he and the companion he bore sank in the mighty rush of waters and were never heard of again."[1]

In those days, when the rivalry between the Hudson's Bay Company and the North-West Company was at red heat, many of Donald's relations played important and stirring parts. There was a famous fur-trader, Cuthbert Grant, and another, Cuthbert Cumming, both cousins of his mother. Thus Rupert's Land and New Caledonia, though divided by a vast expanse of ocean, formed no *terra incognita* to at least one household in Forres.

When Donald Smith was in his sixteenth year there came home, on furlough, the adventurous uncle whose career as a famous pioneer in the far West shone like a guiding star in the firmament of young Donald's most ardent desires. Being taken into the family councils, he promptly decided that his nephew's desire to leave school and earn his own livelihood was a most reasonable one, and ought to be encouraged. But he appeared by no means enthusiastic about his entering the service of the Hudson's Bay Company. "A rough life," he explained, "and miserably slow of promotion, and uncertain of proper reward." He thought Donald had rather the makings of a lawyer in him. However, he advised waiting a year or so, and if his nephew was still of the same mind, he would, he said, on his return, take him with him to London and introduce him to one or the other of the directors. After a brief sojourn in Forres, where the old gentleman charmed everyone by his

[1] Letter of John Stuart to William MacGillivray.

fine manners, Stuart left for London, where his own son, Donald, destined for a military profession, was at school; and eventually he went on an extensive continental tour, of which we shall hear anon.

Meanwhile, Donald left school, where he had distinguished himself both in Latin and mathematics, and entered the office of Mr. Robert Watson, the town clerk of Forres. Thereafter the "Burgh Registers of Sasines and Town's Chartularies" (as they are called), contain many pages of his handiwork, each entry in Latin or English being followed by the statement, "written by Donald Smith." He studied law, too, to some purpose, as many passages in an old note-book, drawn from Erskine's *Law of Scotland,* attest. One of these, written in a neat, almost precise character, dated February 2nd, 1838, is not without an ulterior significance to students of Lord Strathcona's life.

Under the sanction of the law may be also included that part of it which proposes rewards, as encouragements to obedience. Cumberland, c. 5, De leg. nat. and 40, maintains, that is the chief and most proper sanction of a law. But his reasoning appears too subtle, and it is certain that this species of sanction is but little in the power of earthly law givers. No state can possibly furnish out a stock sufficient for rewarding all who may live in due observance of the laws; it is God alone who can only inflict the severest pains upon transgressors, but also from the inexhaustible treasures of His power and goodness, animate His creatures to obedience by the highest rewards.

Voluntary servants are those who enter into service without compulsion, by an agreement or covenant, for a determinate time; either simply for bed, board, and clothing, or also for wages. Under voluntary servants may be included apprentices, who engage to serve under a merchant, artificer, or manufacturer for a determinate number of years, on condition that the master shall, in that time, instruct them in the knowledge of his particular art or profession.

All masters have a power of moderate chastisement over their servants, whether voluntary or necessary; and the masters of public workhouses are allowed to go all lengths in correction, life and torture excepted.

But it soon became manifest that the slow processes of the law were but an ill-road to fortune for Donald Smith.

It so happened that a pair of wealthy and highly esteemed Manchester merchants, named Grant, were cousins of the Smith family. To them Mrs. Smith wrote for advice in settling this question of her son's career.

These Grants of Manchester,[1] high-minded, generous and warm-hearted people, have a very interesting association with literature. Charles Dickens, in the early flush of his success, chanced to meet them during a visit to Manchester, and introduced them into his novel of *Nicholas Nickleby* under the name of "The Cheeryble Brothers." Lord Strathcona's paternal grandmother was the sister of Mrs. Grant, the mother of these delightful brothers; and what the mother was to the sons is set forth, as readers of the novel will remember, in the description of the dinner given by the Cheerybles in honour of the birthday of Tim Linkinwater, their confidential clerk.

"Brother Charles," said one Cheeryble to the other, "my dear fellow, my dear fellow, there is another association connected with this day which must never be forgotten by you and me. This day, which brought into the world a most faithful and excellent and exemplary fellow, took from it the kindest and very best parent to us both. I wish that she could have seen us both in our prosperity and shared it, and had the happiness of knowing how dearly we loved her in it, as we did when we were poor boys. My dear brother—The Memory of our Mother!"

In reply to her application, Mrs. Smith learned that there was a vacancy in the office of the Grants which the young man might fill, and that though the position was humble, there would be a prosperous course open to him if he showed capacity and industry. Such an opening promised a wider outlook and greater opportunities than could be afforded by settling down in the narrow groove of a town clerk's office. But even this chance was not all. Another relative, a Mr. M'Gregor, in the East India

[1] *See* Appendix A.

Company's service, wrote offering to befriend his cousin Donald, and obtain for him, if he wished it, a writership in the company. And while the youth hesitated another outlook suddenly presented itself. His uncle, John Stuart, wrote him from the Continent and offered him a junior clerkship in the service of the Hudson's Bay Company, or to procure some other advantageous opening in Canada through one or the other of his many friends there. The writer added that in a few weeks he would be returning to London, and that he would be glad if his nephew would then visit him at his Clerkenwell lodgings and discuss the situation with him further.

Promptly the die was cast. Canada for years past had been the haven of Donald Smith's dreams.

Donald's elder brother, John, had already embarked on a medical career; he obtained an appointment in the East India Company's service, and throughout a long life as an army surgeon, was accounted an able and painstaking officer. He was a handsome man and very fastidious as to his personal appearance.[1] Many Anglo-Indians, no doubt, still remember him. The physical likeness between the two brothers was very striking, and in their old age it became even more marked than in their youth. In other respects they appear to have had but little in common; their careers lay half a world apart, and they corresponded but rarely.

After the terrible scourge of smallpox, in 1841, had carried off two of their daughters, Margaret and Marianne, the Smith family returned to Strathspey. In his native parish of Knockando, Alexander Smith died in 1847. Many years afterwards, Donald's mother and his sister, Jane, returned to Forres and lived there, from his return from

[1] For example, under date of 30th November, 1878, Field-Marshal Sir Donald Stewart, writing of the hardships of an Indian campaign, observes: "I have begun to grow a beard; everyone in camp had given up razors except myself and Dr. Smith, my chief medical officer, *a great swell in his way and very good-looking.* He and I are the only two in camp who have white collars."—G. R. Elmslie's *Life of Field-Marshal Sir Donald Stewart.*

Labrador in 1864-5 until Mrs. Smith's death in 1874. On the latter occasion he was present at the funeral and carried through the executry.[1]

[1] On a tombstone in Forres Churchyard, erected to the memory of Lord Strathcona's parents and brother and sisters, there is carved the following inscription:

This stone with enclosure is erected
by
JOHN STUART SMITH
and
DONALD ALEXANDER SMITH
To mark the place where lie interred their
father,
ALEXANDER SMITH,
who died at Archiestown, Knockando, on
3rd March, 1847, aged 66 years;
And their mother,
BARBARA STUART,
who died at Forres on the 18th of April, 1874,
in her 90th year;
Also their brother and sisters, who all died at Forres
or neighbourhood,
JAMES M'GREGOR on the 29th October, 1826,
aged 3;
MARGARET, on the 12th January, 1841, aged 27;
and
MARIANNE, on the 14th December, 1841, aged
16 years.

LORD STRATHCONA (Aged 18)

From a Miniature

CHAPTER II

DEPARTURE FOR CANADA (1838)

TO-DAY, amidst the drab wilderness of Clerkenwell, in its grimy tenements, shops, and warehouses, we should as soon expect to find lodgings suitable for the portly and humorous old fur-trader, John Stuart, as for his dapper and benevolent contemporary in that quarter of the town, Mr. Samuel Pickwick. London has undergone a social regrouping, and a modern chronicler, bestowing any regard upon the fitness of things, would hesitate to house either hero further east than Bloomsbury.

In estimating the race of Scotsmen, wise Englishmen abandon social tests and prejudices which are manifestly foolish when applied indiscriminately north of the Tweed. Stuart was essentially a gentleman, and even a courtier. He once composed an ode in praise of the virtues of George IV. Dignified, pleasant-mannered, fond of conversation, he could not fail to be esteemed in any company. Such being the case, it may be surprising to learn that this affable Highland laird had been for forty years trading peltries with Red Indians in the icy solitudes of Rupert's Land.[1]

Yet, such as he was, Stuart might easily have been matched by many of his fur-trading associates of the Old Regime. The breed has all but vanished, and vanished, one fears, never to return. Into his epistolary style, as well as his private life, on his return to his native land, a peep is afforded by the following lengthy letter, addressed

[1] Washington Irving, who in *Astoria* has spoken of his brother Robert Stuart so handsomely, once referred to Mr. John Stuart as the "Chesterfield of the Wilderness."

to his kinsman, Alexander Stewart, also a Chief Factor in the Hudson's Bay Company:

London,
February 15, 1836.

Alexander Stewart, Esq.

My dear Sir,—It was a disappointment to me not to have heard from you by any of the arrivals from Canada. I had, however, much satisfaction in being informed by our friend Simon McGillivray,[1] whom I see daily, that you continue in the enjoyment of good health; and I sincerely hope you may long continue to enjoy that greatest of earthly blessings—the only thing that is much worth caring for. I think with the exception of fifteen days (eight of which I was confined to my bed) at Edinburgh, I scarcely ever enjoyed better health in my life. Old friends, both here and in Scotland, tell me that I look better and not older than when I was here before in 1819.

I have been *on the go* since my first arrival here, October 27, having travelled over great part of England, most of Scotland, and no small part of Ireland; but my plan was in some measure deranged by my sickness, and, my time being limited, I could not protract my stay so as to have called on your friends, a circumstance that I regret much; but if I live ever to see Scotland again you may rest assured that they will be among the first I will visit there. In my excursion I saw our friend Haldane, and I am certain that he looks far better and younger than when I saw him in the Columbia in 1821. He is quite comfortable, lives like a nobleman, and you can't imagine how kind and attentive he was to me. Without any knowledge of mine he mentioned my being returned to the country to Mr. Leith, a brother of James Leith, who had the kindness to call on me, and I had the satisfaction to dine with him yesterday. He is of the house of Sir Charles Forbes, and one of the most gentlemanly men I ever saw, and so excessively obliging that I cannot express the half of his kindness to me. He has a maiden and a widow sister living with him at present; but they pass the summer in the vicinity of Elgin, and are acquainted with several of my friends there. They are fine women, equally kind with their brother, and pressed me that when I go to Scotland and remain in the vicinity of Elgin I will make their residence my home. This, together with the intimacy I have the honour to have with one or two other families of respectability here, ensures me an advantage that is not common at the Hudson's Bay House, and although I have not intruded on their kindness or been

[1] Brother of William McGillivray, chief partner of the old North-West Company and its agent in London, before the coalition with the Hudson's Bay Company in 1821.

present at any committee meeting, I have so far no cause to complain. Every request of mine has been complied with, and really I could not, if I was to attempt it, earn the kind attention I experience from Mr. Simpson,[1] whom I see daily perhaps half a dozen times, mostly at my own lodgings; and if we were supposed sometimes to be on good terms and intimate while at York Factory, I now consider that we are much more so, and for the simple reason we are here more on an equality. I think that I know him better than most people, and am satisfied that when left to himself unbiassed to follow the dictates of his good heart, there cannot be a more kind or better man; but he is alike easily influenced by the flattery and prejudice of others, and when once aroused, excitable and without much reflection, will go any lengths.

I had almost forgot that at Belfast[2] I had the very great satisfaction of seeing our old friend Mr. McLeod, and it is wonderful how well he stands it out. His hair is a little grey, but in other respects there is scarcely any alteration; and although not in that affluence in which he once was, he appears to be comfortable and gives good dinners. He has two fine daughters, but has had the misfortune lately to have lost the eldest. Her poor mother, who is still an invalid, was near perishing in going to see her, and arrived only at Mull, which she did in sufficient time to witness the remains of her daughter. What a spectacle for a poor mother!

I have also seen Simon McGillivray, and if royalty no longer visits his house, many of the nobility are frequent guests there. He enjoys good health; but the South American climate appears to have altered his frame, and he also has grey hair. I was near forgetting that I was much pleased with my excursion, and when I tell you in the whole extent of my travels I passed not through any place of note where I had not either relatives, old acquaintances, or good introductions to persons who were attentive, I need scarcely add that I was delighted. It is the only time in my life in which I may be said to have enjoyed myself; and as I have laid all mercenary trouble aside I converse with equal freedom with all classes,

[1] Later Sir George Simpson, Governor-in-Chief of Rupert's Land.

[2] Where his brother, Peter Stuart, had long been Fort Major. "My grandfather, Peter Stuart," writes his granddaughter, Mrs. Lewis of Belfast, "was Fort Major of Belfast for a very long period. I saw him on my first visit to Ireland in 1861, when he had retired many years, being then in his ninety-third year. He died in 1863. . . . When I was six years old, in 1846, our granduncle, John Stuart, visited us at Clapham. I have a most distinct remembrance of him, with his well-shaped head, pink complexion, and snow-white hair. When I saw his nephew, Lord Strathcona, a dozen years ago, it struck me he was very like granduncle John; both he and his brother, Dr. Stuart Smith, were of the same type as my granduncle."

and if I have not the name of having the *ton*, the bluntness of my manners do not seem to displease either male or female.

I now find that I have written nearly a sheet without having entered on any of the topics I intended to make the subject of this letter. In the first place, you have been advising me not to resign—nor have I done so; yet I would consider it a great favour from you were you to acquaint me on what terms Mr. Clark (who, I understand, is doing very well and not misspending his means) has resigned. The knowledge of it may be of use to me when the proper time comes. At present I have got a leave of absence until the summer of 1837, and am preparing to go to the Continent and try what effect the fine climate of Nice, of Piedmont, and of Savoy may have in recruiting my shattered frame. If I find the climate congenial I will likely remain a twelvemonth, and may extend the excursion to Genoa, Corfu, the Ionian Islands, and Malta, where I have some friends or a good introduction, and if I had a travelling companion I have little doubt but I could pass the time agreeably; but such a thing is not easily to be had. There is, however, a practicability that either James Leith or James Keith, or perhaps both, may go. At least, I hold that the state of Mr. Keith's health will not admit of his returning to Canada, and that Sieveright is to remain in charge at Le Chat.

Mr. Leith lives in Devonshire, about two hundred miles from here. His friends wish him to accompany me, and I am to pay him a visit and try my own influence. Mr. McTavish, I think, is not so great a favourite as in America—like some others now that matters are placed in order. He is not to have the Chats, but will have either Fort Coulogne or leave of absence, as he may prefer.

Captain Back[1] like a man of honour, has acted nobly to Roderick McLeod, has been in conference with the Committee and extorted the promise of a Factorship, which is to be made out in March. I have not seen Captain Back since, but I mean to call to-morrow and thank him. In November I saw him frequently. He introduced me to his sister and was immensely kind. He has been promoted by Order of Council—I believe the third instance of the kind that ever occurred—and stands very high in public estimation.

My cousin enjoys good health, and desires to be kindly remembered to you. Donald also, I am happy to say, is well and a fine-looking boy. I am not competent to judge myself, but he is said also to be a good scholar, is now reading Sallust and Virgil in Latin, and has made some progress in both Greek and French, besides doing drilling, etc. I had some thought of taking him along with me

[1] The Arctic explorer.

to the Continent and placing him in the seminary where Napoleon received his education, but his tutor strongly recommended that he should be kept for one year more under him; and as my cousin also, who has the rearing of him, is of the same opinion, I have consented to allow him to remain, and I have not seen him since I came last to town, but will in the course of a few days.

I am going this evening to the House of Commons to witness the defence of O'Connell, and if I am back in time will give my opinion of that celebrated agitator; but that is neither worth your while nor mine.

There was a sale in December and beaver sold tolerably, but rats miserably, averaging not a sixpence each. I do not write Robertson because a letter from me will not to him be worth the postage. Remember me kindly both to him and his amiable wife, my dear Nancy. When you write me address under cover to Sir James McGrigor of Campden Hill, Bart., Army Medical Department, and let the packet to him be unopened, not sealed, and addressed to the care of the Right Honorable the Secretary at War, which will save postage.

I will now bid you farewell in the fond hopes that your health may improve and in the assurance that, whether I will return to the Indian country or not, I will, if God spares me, keep my promise and go out to Canada to see my friends. Remember me kindly to every individual comprising your fine family, and rest assured that I am unalterably, my dear sir, yours most truly and sincerely,

JOHN STUART.

In accordance with the designs expressed in the foregoing letter, Stuart departed duly for the Continent, in company with his friend and former fur-trading associate, James Leith.[1] During the ensuing year and a half at many a lonely station in Rupert's Land there came letters from Stuart descriptive of his travels. He tells one that while in Rome he read a chapter of Gibbon amidst the

[1] Chief Factor James Leith was originally appointed a clerk from Aberdeen. On his death in 1849, Mr. Leith bequeathed the sum of £10,000 "for the purpose of establishing, propagating, and extending the Christian Protestant religion in and amongst the native aboriginal Indians of Rupert's Land." The executors were the Bishop of London, the Dean of Westminster, the Governor and Deputy of the Hudson's Bay Company, and his (the testator's) brother, Mr. William Leith. The money became lodged in Chancery, and was committed to the Bishop of Rupert's Land by the Court of Chancery upon the understanding that the Company would add to the Bishop's income a salary of £300 per annum and provide him with a residence. In 1857 Sir George Simpson stated that the fund, with accumulations of interest, amounted to £13,345.

ruins of the Coliseum. He was at Malta when news of the death of King William arrived and the accession of the young Princess Victoria. "The new system of four years of absence has become quite fashionable," observes Chief Factor Peter Ogden, in a letter from Western Caledonia, dated February 27th, 1837. "Our old friend, John Stuart, is dashing away on the Continent after his long sojourn in the Indian country. I fear he will yet die a poor man. He was always most extravagant."[1]

When at length, early in 1838, Stuart returned to England and to his lodgings in Clerkenwell, he had finally resolved upon retirement. Amongst the letters awaiting his arrival was one from his sister, Barbara Smith, of Forres, expressing the pleasure she felt at his decision to pass the remainder of his days at Forres. "Springfield,"[2] she wrote, "is untenanted, and there is no prescription better to be recommended than that of breathing your native air again." Her younger son, Donald, had finally resolved to abandon the law, and after hesitating about entering the establishment of her cousin, Mr. Grant, at Manchester, now contemplated trying his fortunes in Canada, either with the Hudson's Bay Company or in some other capacity. Concerning this move Donald desired his uncle's advice, and only awaited news of his return to London in order to set out from Forres.

It was on April 14th, 1838, that Stuart's nephew, Donald Smith, bade farewell to his parents, his sisters, and boyhood's friends. He did not again see his native town for more than a quarter of a century.

Albeit, that "noblest prospect a Scotsman ever sees—the highroad to London," was not for him. His trunk went forward by carrier, and he set out on foot to Aberdeen, taking a coasting schooner thence to the English capital.

[1] Roberston MSS. Cox, *Adventures on the Columbia.*

[2] A pleasant little estate near Forres, afterwards purchased by John Stuart, and where he passed his declining years. He died in 1847.

A Characteristic Story

Apropos of this spring-time trudge to Aberdeen a story is told.

One morning, in the early years of the present century, an elderly individual, of no very prepossessing appearance, called at the office of the High Commissioner for Canada in London, and asked to see Lord Strathcona. He was told that his lordship was far too busy to see any but those who had appointments with him.

"Well," was the confident reply, "he'll see me if you tell him that my father drove him to Aberdeen when he sailed for Canada."

The message was taken in to Lord Strathcona, and the result was to gain immediate admittance for the visitor. Five minutes later he emerged with a five-pound note crackling in his hands.

Three weeks later the same man reappeared. Again he was told how busy the High Commissioner was, five or six persons being in the waiting-room with appointments. His answer was the same: "Tell him my father drove him to Aberdeen when he sailed for Canada." The result was that in he went, and after a little while out he emerged rustling another five-pound note.

A few weeks later, back he came a third time. The secretary felt that the limits of benevolence must surely have been reached.

"Here is this broken-down Aberdonian, sir, come to see you again—the man who says his father drove you to Aberdeen when you went to Canada. He has had two five-pound notes from you already."

"Oh, well," said Lord Strathcona in his quiet way, "I cannot see him. Give him another five-pound note and tell him he need not come again. You may add that his father did not drive me to Aberdeen when I went to Canada. As a matter of fact, I walked."

At the time when he left Scotland Donald Smith was a lad of rather more than average height, with a fresh com-

plexion, light sandy hair, and grey-blue eyes. His features were cast in a large mould, and his general expression then, as always, one of alertness and resolution, combined with amiability.

Our narrative now brings us to the first of his letters to his mother.

LONDON,
April 30, 1838.

MY DEAR MOTHER,—I arrived in London early yesterday morning in the best of health and none the worse for my journey. I thought it would be prudent not to call upon uncle at his lodgings in Clerkenwell until after ten o'clock, so that I had plenty of time to deliver Mrs. Grant's parcel to be called for at the coach office in Ludgate Hill. Uncle Stuart received me cordially, and is looking well. He was obliged to fulfil an important business engagement, but I accompanied him in a stage as far as Hanover Square, and I afterwards dined with him and Mr. James Murdoch in Clerkenwell. He quite approved my plans for leaving at once for Canada in case he is unable to arrange for a clerkship here, in which case I should sail in the *Camden*. I am to go and see Mr. Smith[1] in Fenchurch Street to-morrow. Mr. Stuart strongly advises my not accepting anything but from Governor Simpson himself, who could effect much more favourable arrangements if he were to be disposed to do so. Openings in the Indian country are much more difficult and less profitable than formerly. The prospects of a great decrease in the price of beaver is everywhere spoken of. My uncle assured me that if he had to begin his career afresh he would have nothing to do with the Honourable Company or with the Indian country, but would settle in Upper Canada, where land is cheap and quite large towns are springing up in all parts.

Unfortunately, both Upper and Lower Canada are now deeply involved in political difficulties, and trade and commerce may be at a standstill when I arrive. But my uncle confides that if Governor S. can do nothing in the Bay or in the North-West, there are in contemplation new posts in the East for which I may be found suitable. Should this fail, Mr. Stuart's old friend in Boucherville will instruct me best how to proceed. Governor Simpson is, he says, surrounded by many satellites who naturally desire to advance their own relatives.

London is a very gay place at this season of the year. I have already visited the west end of the town, walking all the way from

[1] William Gregory Smith, secretary of the Hudson's Bay Company.

the Mansion House, where the Lord Mayor resides, to Hyde Park, where the aristocracy are to be seen riding and driving. You have heard of Rotten Row: it is a fine place. Here the trees and flowers are a good month in advance of ours in Scotland, or at least in Forres. Had I been in the park an hour later or earlier, I should have been rewarded by the spectacle of Her Majesty. The Queen and the Duchess of Kent, her mother, drive every day, I am told; so I shall hope to enjoy the privilege.

To-morrow, after my return from Fenchurch Street, I am accompanying my uncle to Ealing. I do not know yet whether I shall meet my cousin, Donald Stuart, or not. I will write you fully before I sail. Give my love to Margaret and to Marianne. Also to Jane when you write.

I am, my dear mother, your affectionate son,

DONALD SMITH.

To "be rewarded by the spectacle of Her Majesty" would probably excite derision nowadays amongst clerks of eighteen; but both the aspiration and the expression were then, and ever, characteristic of Donald Smith. He was a youth of ideals, and like most Highlanders of his class, a conservative, and reverent of all authority to the point of humility. The great-grandson of a Jacobite who had been out in the '45, he had, nevertheless, no sympathy with radicals, republicans, or rebels, and the action of Papineau, Mackenzie, and the rest who had just then been plunging Upper and Lower Canada into confusion and bloodshed, excited his resentment.

But his stay in London was brief—so brief, indeed, that he was not even "rewarded by the spectacle of Her Majesty," although his magnificent uncle took him to hear a debate in the gallery of the House of Commons, where he saw Lords Melbourne and Brougham, and a number of youthful legislators who were afterwards to fill all Europe with their renown. He noted particularly the Reporters' Gallery, and remembered that he had once cherished thoughts in that direction. Fifteen months before, his eye would have lighted on the eager, boyish figure of Charles Dickens, whom he was afterwards to see and hear, amongst

the occupants of that same gallery. The famous novelist's father, John Dickens, and his father-in-law, George Hogarth, were still there. The visitors tried to get into the House of Lords, but for some reason failed. The time for this adventure was not yet. Sixty years later this young Scottish emigrant was to enter the gilded chamber in the robes and wearing the coronet of a peer. Such reflections are trite only so far as all repeated magic is trite. We may multiply romances and sunsets; but the wonder remains eternal.

Just prior to his departure Donald wrote thus to his mother:

LONDON,

May 9, 1838.

MY DEAR MOTHER,—All is now arranged, and I am to sail for Quebec in the *Royal William* at short notice, perhaps to-night or to-morrow morning, according to tide and cargo. You will therefore not hear from me again until my next letter reaches you from Canada, supposing that I am spared by Providence.

It is still doubtful whether I shall enter the service of the Hudson's Bay Company in any capacity. At present my own view favours Upper Canada. I have letters to Governor Simpson, Mr. Stewart, and Mr. Lewis Grant. My uncle strongly advises me, on arrival at Montreal, to push on westward. Canada is at present in a most troubled state, and trade is in consequence suffering. Lord Durham sailed for Quebec in the *Hastings* a fortnight ago with royal powers to effect a settlement of the troubles and administer punishment to the rebels.

I shall hardly arrive before the middle of June, but this will depend upon the weather, especially in the Gulf and River of St. Lawrence, where fogs and ice prevail until very late in the spring.

My love to you and to all. Rest assured I shall write fully. My uncle leaves next week for the north. I remain, my dear mother, your affectionate son,

DONALD.

In his pocket Donald Smith carried at least three letters of introduction written by his uncle.

That to the fur-trade autocrat, the "Emperor of the Plains," the redoubtable Governor Simpson, read:

London,

May 8, 1838.

My dear Sir,—The bearer of this, my nephew, Mr. D. A. Smith, entertains at present thoughts of following in the footsteps of his uncle and many of our old friends in the fur trade, and for this reason desires the honour of an interview with you, which perhaps for my sake you will grant. He is of good character, studious, painstaking, and enterprising. He has recently been devoting his attention to the law, but has decided to leave this for a more active life. If you know of any way in which he may be of service to the Hudson's Bay Company, the exercise of your interest will only add one more obligation to the debt at present borne by, my dear sir, yours ever most sincerely and respectfully,

John Stuart.

The other letters were to Mr. Edward Ellice and Mr. Alexander Stewart.

We must not take leave of the old fur-trader without presenting in full his letter to the last-named kinsman, partly for its intrinsic interest, but more especially because of its reference to the subject of this work.

London,

May 10, 1838.

My dear, respected old Friend,—It is now a long time since I have had the pleasure of receiving a letter from you, only but once since my return to this country. Still, I had the happiness of being informed by Governor Simpson that you continue in the enjoyment of that, the greatest of earthly blessings, health; and next to the pleasure of hearing from yourself personally, nothing could afford me equal satisfaction. I have written you frequently, but as I did not like to trouble the Hudson's Bay Company with the carriage, and sent the letters by vessels sailing direct to Quebec—which, I am told, is not the most sure conveyance—it is possible you did not secure them, and I shall in future be more careful and send them either in the Hudson's Bay packet or by post.

My health, thank God, is wonderfully good considering my age, and the change of climate and of living. I scarcely was ever better in my life, and most earnestly do hope and pray that you may long continue to enjoy the same blessing. You are the oldest and most valued of my North-West friends; how can I ever forget the happiness I enjoyed in your company?—our minds ever congenial,

nor do I know that we ever differed seriously even in opinion. From this circumstance alone is now derived more than half my present happiness, and I think I enjoy more than a common share for an Indian trader. If I am not a guest at Fenchurch Street, I have friends of my own both here and in every part of the kingdom who are equally respectable and who are always pleased to see me.

I do not know what you will think of my retirement, but of all that I asked nothing was refused. Whether I could obtain better terms is immaterial; I did not ask it, and my resignation is accepted for 1st June, 1839—though retaining my two full $\frac{2}{85}$ for that outfit and my retired $\frac{1}{85}$ for the succeeding six years, 1840, 41, 42, 43, 44, and 1845. If these are better terms than commonly granted, I in a great measure owe it to Governor Simpson. I have heard that you have met with a great loss through the mismanagement, or something worse, of Felix La Rocque, but I have not heard the particulars and hope it is not material. I hope you will write me particulars regarding your affairs, and if there is any in which I can be of use to you, I hope you will command me as a brother.

My nephew, Mr. D. A. Smith, the bearer of this, has this moment (9 P.M.) a summons to be on board by 10 P.M., which compels me to cut short. You will probably see my nephew, and will not like him the worse for being the son of my sister. He is, I believe, a fine lad, acknowledged by all to be of an excellent character. He goes *à la venture;* and if it is possible that through your friends you could procure any situation for him better than that of entering the service of the Hudson's Bay Company, I know that for my sake you will do it.

Remember me kindly to every individual comprising your family, and with every kind wish for you all, believe me unalterably, my dear respected old friend, yours ever most sincerely,

JOHN STUART.

There was a delay of some days, and it was after midnight on the 16th before the *Royal William* swung down the Thames on her voyage to Quebec.

By this time Donald had almost abandoned the notion of entering the service of the Hudson's Bay Company on his arrival in the New World. His thoughts were wrapped up in Upper Canada, and the vast and wonderful opportunities which were set forth in the prospectus of the Canada Company, and the pages of the two emigrants'

guides, which he continued to pore over even in the throes of sea-sickness.

There were only two other passengers on the ship, and from one of these—a Mr. Ross, who had formerly taken up land in Upper Canada and was familiar with the country and the conditions of life there—he obtained a great deal of additional information of a character not set down in the books. Mr. Ross had disposed of his land, and had embarked in the lumber business in Quebec, for which industry he predicted a great future. The only black cloud he saw on the horizon was the danger of Parliament repealing the Navigation Laws, and so enabling Great Britain to procure her supply of timber from the Baltic ports without payment of duty. This, in his opinion, would deal a deadly blow both at the British trade in timber and also at colonial shipping; for at that time ships were able to make a profit even if the outward voyage were under ballast, as was that of the *Royal William*.

Mr. Smith learnt a great deal from Mr. Ross of the character and sufferings of the immigrants into Upper Canada, who were pouring by shiploads into a country whose cultivated parts, strange as it may seem, were already congested with labour.

Addressing an Oxford audience at the close of the century, Lord Strathcona recalled the Canada of his youth. He said:

> My first voyage took between forty and fifty days, and the clipper-ship in which I sailed, of about 500 tons or thereabouts, was a considerable vessel in those days—the largest boat of the kind known at that time being about 1,000 tons. A few weeks ago I crossed the Atlantic, spent a week in Canada, and was back again in London in three weeks from the day I started!
>
> In 1838 there was no Dominion of Canada. British North America consisted of what are now the Provinces of Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island, New Brunswick, Quebec, Ontario, and Newfoundland. The country west of Ontario, now the Provinces of Manitoba, the North-West Territories, and British Columbia, and the territory

adjoining Hudson's Bay, was under the control of the great Company of that name, which received its charter in 1670. The only inhabitants of this western country were the officers of the Company, the trappers, and the Indians. All the Provinces were separate and distinct, and they had treated each other as independent communities. The population of British North America numbered about 1,200,000.

No one travelling through Ontario and the other Provinces to-day could imagine the state of things that existed sixty years ago. It seems almost incredible. Everything is made so easy for emigrants now—the travelling is comfortable, the voyage is short, the food is much better than many of them get at home, and free grants of prairie land can be obtained unencumbered with trees and quite ready for the plough.

In 1838 the only incorporated city in Canada was Toronto, which at that time had a population of from 13,000 to 14,000 people. In Lower Canada, Quebec at that time was a more important town, in many ways, than Montreal. It was at the head of the navigation, as the shallows in Lake St. Peter, on the St. Lawrence, had not then been dredged, and it was the *entrepôt* of a greater share of the St. Lawrence trade than it is now. A few ocean vessels of light draught went up to Montreal, but much of the merchandise for that city was transhipped at Quebec into other vessels.

He went on to say :

The social condition of the people was naturally not of a high standard. Their work was hard, their mode of living simple, their houses largely log huts, and they had to go long distances to sell their produce and to buy new supplies. This, of course, refers largely to the country districts, or backwoods, as they were called in those days. In the towns and villages there was plenty of intercourse ; and, judging from my own early experiences, life in the centres of population was pleasant and attractive, and the Canadians were as generous in their hospitality as they are known to be to-day.

Lord Strathcona's great services in the peopling of the Canadian Dominion at a later day warrant us in pausing for a moment further to glance at the economic conditions prevalent on his arrival in 1838.

With the close of the Napoleonic wars an unceasing stream of emigrants from the British Isles began to flow into Canada. It was naturally in the interests of the

great private landowners—the majority of whom were absentees—and the great land companies, such as the Canada Company and the British American Land Company, as well as the Government of the country, to induce as many British families and labourers as possible to establish homesteads in Upper Canada, the eastern townships of Quebec, and in Prince Edward Island. It deserves to be remembered that in the decade and a half between 1815 and 1830, no fewer than 168,615 immigrants arrived at the port of Quebec. Lord Durham, in his famous *Report* of 1839, stated that in the previous nine years 263,089 immigrants had landed at Quebec, adding that, if certain facts had been known, this inrush of the poorer classes would have ceased.

The story of that period of Canadian immigration has yet to be told. It is incontestable that the bulk of these immigrants were herded in foul ships, and that they made the voyage to Canada under distressing and infamous conditions. Dr. John Skey, Deputy Inspector-General of Hospitals, and President of the Quebec Emigrants' Society, testified that the emigrants with families, from the south of Ireland in particular, as well as the pauper emigrants sent by parishes from England, arrived for the most part in a state of great poverty, although the voluntary emigrants from England had a little money.

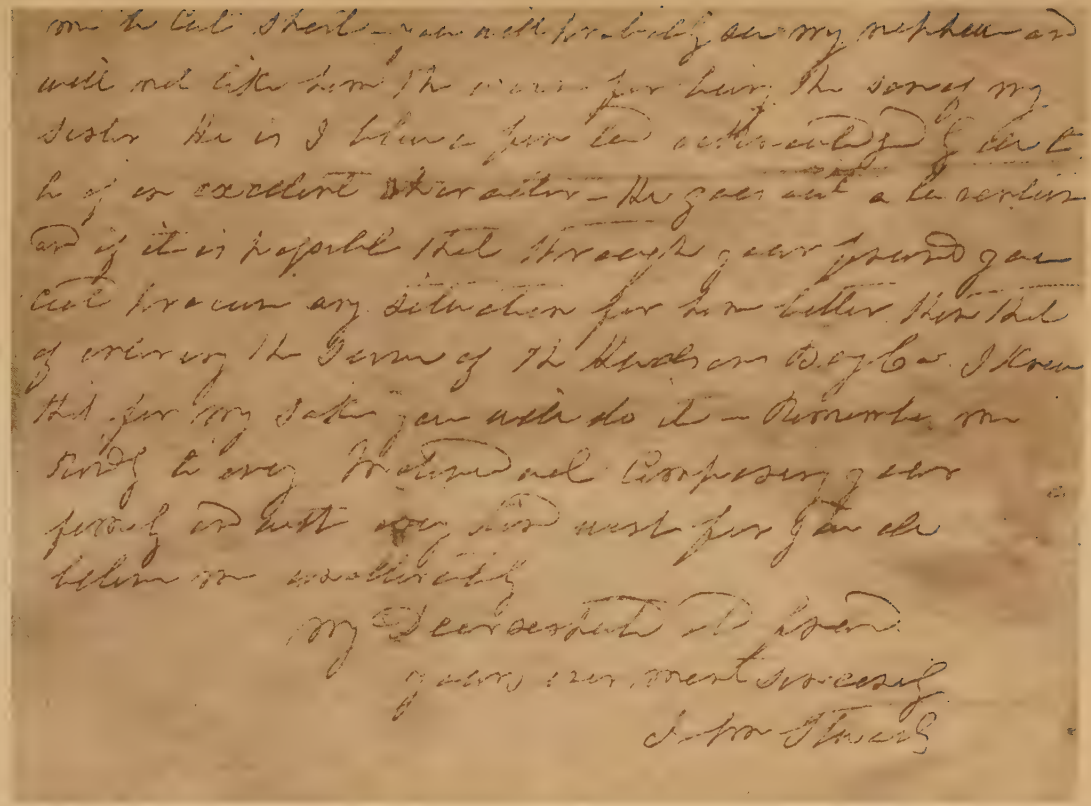
Another authority testified that " the poorer classes of Irish and the English paupers sent by parishes were, on arrival of vessels, in many instances entirely without provisions, so much so that it was necessary immediately to supply them with food from shore; some of these ships had already received food and water from other vessels with which they had fallen in. . . . This destitution or shortness of provisions, combined with dirt and bad ventilation, had invariably produced fevers of a contagious character, and occasioned some deaths on the passage, and from such vessels numbers, varying from twenty to ninety

each vessel, had been admitted to hospital with contagious fevers immediately upon arrival. For lack of proper food, the immigrants fall into a state of debility and low spirits by which they are incapacitated from the exertions required for cleanliness and exercise, and also indisposed to solid food, more particularly the women and children; and on their arrival here I find many cases of typhus fever among them."

It was said that the condition of many of the ships was so abominable that the pestiferous odours could easily be distinguished—with the wind in the right quarter—when an emigrant ship arrived. "I have known as many as from thirty to forty deaths to have taken place in the course of a voyage, from typhus fever, on board of a ship containing from 500 to 600 passengers; and within six weeks after the arrival of some vessels and the landing of the passengers at Quebec, the hospital has received upwards of 100 patients at different times from among them." Children of sick or dead parents were left without protection and wholly dependent on the casual charity of the inhabitants.[1]

Even those immigrants who had escaped sickness, having sailed with but little money, were often destitute on landing. The extortions of the ship captains on the passage had robbed them of their last shillings. "The captain usually told the emigrants that they need not lay in provisions for more than three weeks or a month, well knowing that the average passage was six weeks, and often eight or nine weeks. Laying by his own stock of provisions, the captain, after the emigrants' supplies had run out, obliged them to pay as much as 400 per cent. on the cost price for food, and of nauseating quality at that." Of these particular immigrants, Dr. Morrin reported that they were generally forcibly landed by the masters of vessels, and without a shilling in their pockets to get a

[1] *Imperial Blue Books on Affairs relating to Canada.* Testimony of Dr. J. Morrin.



DONALD A. SMITH'S LETTER OF INTRODUCTION
TO ALEXANDER STEWART
Facsimile of the Last Page

night's lodging. "They commonly established themselves along the wharves and at the different landing-places, crowding into any place of shelter they could obtain, where they subsisted principally upon the charity of the inhabitants.

"For six weeks at a time," stated the last-named witness, "from the commencement of the emigrant-ship season, I have known the shores of the river along Quebec, for about a mile and a half, crowded with these unfortunate people, the places of those who might have moved off constantly supplied by fresh arrivals, and there being daily drafts of from ten to thirty taken to the hospital with infectious disease. The consequence was its spread among the inhabitants of the city, especially in the districts in which these unfortunate creatures had established themselves. Those who were not absolutely without money got into low taverns and boarding-houses and cellars, where they congregated in immense numbers, and where their state was not any better than it had been on shipboard. This state of things existed, within my knowledge, from 1826 to 1832, and probably for some years previously."

Sir James Kempt reported that one particular shipload of immigrants, which arrived at Quebec in 1830, were described in a letter from the magistrates of a parish in England as industrious people who had been trained to some branch of woollen manufacture, but who would "cheerfully accept any employment that might be offered." Kempt remonstrated in the strongest terms against the cruelty of attempting to relieve the English and Irish parishes by sending such hordes of paupers to a distant colony, where they arrived destitute among strangers.

Few of these people had agricultural knowledge. Numbers who took to the bush found that they could not make a living, and so thronged the cities. In Lord Durham's *Report* it was stated that many resorted to the larger towns in the Provinces, with their starving families, to eke out

by day-labour and begging together a wretched existence, while such others as could go, tempted by a more genial climate and higher wages, went to the United States. The many, forced by stern necessity, remained in Canada. The Toronto *Mirror,* on May 20th, 1842, and on numerous other occasions, complained that the city was crowded with labourers and mechanics—workmen who had built the railroads and canals in Great Britain, but who were vainly seeking employment.

A decade later famine in Europe drove greater numbers of emigrants, many of whom were agriculturists, to Canada and the United States. Of these, many perished during the passage. The *Report* of the Commissioners of Immigration for the year 1847 showed that in that year of famine and disease, 17,445 British subjects died either on the voyage to Canada and New Brunswick, or in quarantine and the hospitals. This mortality did not include those perishing from contagion disseminated in the principal Canadian cities and settlements.

Nevertheless, there was a vast, continuing influx of workers which, added to the proletariat already in Canada, formed a dependent body of surplus labour required in lumbering, building roads, canals, and railroads, and in agricultural pursuits.

Such, briefly, was one aspect of the Canadian scene, long forgotten or overlooked by history, in the first year of the Victorian era.

It was into this Canada—the receptacle of hordes of dispirited immigrants, where, besides, amongst the old colonists, "two races warred in the bosom of a single state"—that Donald Smith was received.

After a long and dreary voyage, meeting with much fog and many icebergs, the *Royal William* entered the Gulf in the latter half of June. On the 27th she anchored for a day at Frazerville (Rivière du Loup), where the captain went ashore, taking Mr. Smith with him. The seigneur,

Mr. Malcolm Fraser, was a grandson of one of Wolfe's captains. He received the young Highlander cordially, telling him that it was a good omen that he should first have stepped foot in Canada upon the domain of a Highland Fraser. Donald observed that Fraser's English was extremely faulty, both he and his family commonly using the French tongue, but he had enough Gaelic for a fervent *Slainté* in toasting his guests.[1]

On June 30th the ship reached Quebec as the morning sun was shedding a glory over the citadel, ramparts and spires of the famous fortress city of the New World. Four short weeks before Lord Durham, the new Governor and pacificator of British North America, had landed with his suite; the political conditions which caused him to be dispatched by the British Government must be well known to the most elementary student of Canadian history. Two days before—the day of the young Queen's coronation—Lord Durham had issued that "historic Proclamation and Ordinance which was to terminate the rebellion, at the expense of his own career and happiness."

Donald was delighted with Quebec, and would have liked to pass several days there, especially as his new friend, Mr. Ross, offered to procure him an introduction to the influential Mr. William Price,[2] who, he opined, might advance his fortunes. But he resolved to hasten on to Montreal. He dined, however, with his friend at the newly opened Victoria Hotel, where, amongst the commercial folk and lumber merchants assembled, he found the reigning topic of conversation was still the Canadian rebels and the action of Lord Durham concerning them.

The boat on which he travelled to Montreal passed on its way the steamer *Canada*. The sight of this ship

[1] It was at Rivière du Loup that old John McLoughlin, the doughty Pacific fur-trading pioneer, was born.

[2] Mr. Price came to Canada in 1810 and established in course of time extensive lumber mills at Tadousac and Chicoutimi and other points on the Saguenay River. He became famous as "Le Père du Saguenay" and the founder of a family still of commercial power in that part of the country.

occasioned no small amount of excitement, for on board were the convicted rebels, Wolfred Nelson, Robert Milnes, Bouchette, Viger, Marchessault, Gauvin, Goddu, Des Rivières, and Luc Masson, guarded by a detachment of the 71st Regiment. On reaching Quebec these men were transferred immediately to H.M.S. *Vestal,* under sailing orders for Bermuda. Three weeks before, the Upper Canada rebels had been similarly deported.

In Canada Lord Durham's action was generally approved. And he had exceeded his authority in the confident expectation that the Ministry at home also would support him. As we all know, however, the home Government disavowed him; and Lord Durham returned home, a broken-hearted man. He died two years later.

On July 2nd Donald Alexander Smith arrived in the city which was afterwards to be eternally associated with his activities and munificence, and beheld for the first time the steep and rugged eminence from which this unknown Scottish lad was destined one day to borrow a part of his title in the British peerage.

* * * * * *

Montreal at this time was about equal to Quebec in size, but superior in commercial importance.

"Its greatness," wrote a visitor in 1838, "is likely to increase from its favourable situation and the growth of Upper Canada, of which—as being the highest point of the St. Lawrence to which larger vessels can ascend—it always will be the emporium."

In the same or the following year another visitor, N. P. Willis, wrote:

"Although the island possesses in general that level surface that fits it for a thorough cultivation, yet about a mile and a half north-east rises a hill, 550 feet high, commanding a noble view over a fertile country, which is watered by the several branches and tributaries of the St. Lawrence. Its face is covered with agreeable villas,

and its wooded heights form a frequent resort for pleasure-parties of the city. But the intention, now understood to be entertained, of erecting fortifications on its summit will, if put into execution, banish in a great measure its rural character."[1]

The city, built on the southern border of this fine island, was, we are told, " not crowded, like Quebec, into a limited space which can alone be covered with streets and habitations. It has a wide, level surface to extend over, so that even the older streets are of tolerable width, and several of them occupy its entire breadth. The principal one, Rue Notre Dame, considerably exceeds half a mile in extent, and contains many of the chief public buildings.

" There is an Upper and Lower Town, though the difference of elevation is very slight, but the former is much the more handsome. The seven suburbs are not, as in the older capital, detached and extraneous, but on the same level and immediately adjacent. Their streets, continued in the direction of those in the body of the place, are regular, and display many handsome houses. The vicinity is adorned by many beautiful villas."

Of the public buildings of Montreal, the Roman Catholic Cathedral of Notre Dame, completed in 1829, was undoubtedly the most splendid, being, indeed, superior to any other in British North America.

The English establishments for religion and education were, we learn, " also very respectable."

In 1814 an important donation had been made by a wealthy citizen, the Hon. James McGill, to found a college for the principal branches of education. The endowments consisted of a valuable estate on the Mountain, with £10,000 in money. It had not, however, yet come into operation, in consequence of a lawsuit which did not terminate till 1835, when the available funds

[1] N. P. Willis, *Canadian Scenery.*

in the hands of the institution amounted to $22,000. A prospectus announced of this college: "It is to be conducted on the most liberal system, individuals of every religious persuasion being admitted as students and even as teachers."

The harbour of Montreal had not received all the attention its importance merited. It had no wharfage, though close to the bank and in front of the town was a depth of fifteen feet, sufficient for the largest vessels which ascended to this point. Its chief disadvantage consisted of two shoals and the rapid of St. Mary's, about a mile below, which vessels often found it difficult to stem. Important improvements were contemplated, and a grant for the purpose was voted by the Legislature. The communication with the opposite side of the river was carried on by means of ten ferries, on several of which plied a number of steam vessels. A wooden bridge was once constructed from Repentigny, on the northern shore, but in the spring after its completion it was carried down by the masses of ice. It was still thought that one of larger span might be constructed free from that danger.

* * * * * *

Before evening Donald Smith had left a letter of introduction from his uncle at the house of Mr. Edward Ellice, who at the time was not at home. He then walked out to Lachine, where he found Mr. Lewis Grant, a native of Forres and a connection of his mother's. Grant was unable to suggest any favourable opening for the new arrival. He advised him, however, to lose no time in consulting with Mr. Alexander Stewart, who was a man of no little consequence at Boucherville, another suburb of the city.

By this gentleman, whose appearance and manners strikingly recalled his uncle, Donald was confirmed in all his fears concerning the prospects of success in Upper Canada. He remained in Boucherville for a couple of

weeks considering the situation. Then, his host and his friends having all avowed their complete inability to "procure any situation better than that of entering the service of the Hudson's Bay Company," he resolved to take the now apparently inevitable plunge. One July morning, therefore, he duly presented himself and his letter of introduction to Governor Simpson, at the latter's official quarters at Lachine, about eight miles above Montreal.

CHAPTER III

THE HUDSON'S BAY COMPANY (1838-48)

GEORGE SIMPSON, the "King of the Fur Trade" and the "Emperor of the Plains" (to quote but a pair of the titles he demurely admitted in the circle of his flatterers), merits a somewhat more prominent place in Canadian history than Canadian historians commonly accord him.

For forty years Simpson (not yet Sir George) was the outstanding figure in a territory larger than Europe. His simple word was law among a legion of brave and hardy white traders and hunters, and among twenty tribes of savages from the Esquimaux of Ungava, the Crees of Assiniboia, and the Chinooks of New Caledonia.

He was born in 1796 in Loch Broom, Ross-shire, Scotland. From 1819 to 1820 he was employed as a clerk in the West India trade. Lord Selkirk, hearing of his ability, appointed him, just before the coalition of the two rival fur-trading companies, Superintendent of the Hudson's Bay Company's affairs. After one year of successful service, he was chosen Governor of Rupert's Land.[1]

Simpson had been set on this pinnacle of power without

[1] This was the official designation. There was also a Governor of Assiniboia, Red River Settlement; this office, however, was ostensibly confined to the administration of government—such as it was—in the Settlement, and had nothing to do with the trade proper. But this designation of attribute and duty did not apply in all strictness to the earlier governors of Assiniboia, who were generally, if not invariably, Chief Factors in the service of the Company. The supreme Governor was one of the London Board; but for the regulation of trade and the working of its machinery, a governor was appointed by the Governor and Committee of Directory in London, who, with a Council of Commissioned Officers, meeting at a central point, which was Norway House, at the head of Lake Winnipeg, was the only constituted body for conducting the business in the Territory. It was only as the head of this body, and with certain special power *in eundo*, that Mr. Simpson (afterwards Sir George) was at this time Governor-in-Chief.

having given any proofs of special fitness, and knowing less about the fur trade than many a raw youth who had served the first week of his indenture at a third-rate outpost in the Indian country.

To those who know what the fur trade was in the days of the Old Régime, the stern and rugged characters it evolved, the scenes of violence and bloodshed it witnessed, who recall the giant forms of Alexander Mackenzie, William Macgillivray, John George McTavish, John McLoughlin, and the rest, to such as have read the epic of *Astoria,* is there not something ludicrous in the dispatch of such a youth as Simpson to quell a storm which had been raging for two decades, and allay the fierce passions of men who knew no law save their own strength or cunning? Yet Simpson, one of those men "whom the blind goddess delighteth to honour," succeeded. He succeeded simply as a small pin of sound metal, artfully introduced, becomes a pivot around which an unwieldy engine, otherwise threatened by dislocation and disintegration, performs its functions.

In the language of a contemporary trader who had many opportunities of knowing him well, he "combined with the prepossessing manners of a gentleman all the craft and subtlety of an intriguing courtier; while his cold and callous heart was incapable of sympathising with the woes and pains of his fellow-men. On his first arrival he carefully concealed from those whom he was about to supersede the powers with which he was invested; he studied the characters of individuals, scrutinised in secret their mode of managing affairs, and when he had made himself fully acquainted with every particular he desired to know, he produced his commission—a circumstance that proved as unexpected as it was unsatisfactory to those whose interests it affected."[1]

The jealousies and resentments engendered by the long strife made his position at first difficult. He lavished

[1] Chief Trader John McLean, 1849.

"bows and smiles and honeyed words" alternately upon the North-Westers and the gentlemen of the Hudson's Bay Company, each in turn thinking him their partisan.

Having in this way completely gained the confidence of the North-West partners, his policy began gradually to unfold itself. One recalcitrant North-Wester was dispatched with a compliment to the Columbia, another to the Montreal department, another to Rupert's River, until in the course of a few seasons, following this happy precept, *divide et impera,* he had rid himself of all the annoyance and danger of opposition, and his rule, as was truly said, became more absolute than that of any governor under the British Crown.

Amongst Mr. Simpson's gifts, natural or acquired, was the useful one of instilling awe into the breasts of junior clerks and all applicants for office or promotion. He was of small, almost diminutive stature. Though naturally good-tempered, it came to be said of him that "he took delight in the outward show of tyranny." If he was pompous, it was by no means an empty and unprofitable pomposity. Thrust early into a position of great power over numerous subordinates, many of whom only saw him at long intervals in the flesh, he imagined it highly advantageous to cultivate the glance, speech, and bearing of no less a personage than the Emperor Napoleon.

Simpson's admiration for the mighty Corsican was unbounded. It was one of the passions of his life. To-day we have lived to see the Napoleonic cult become positively vulgar. In this quarter of the globe, however, Simpson was one of the pioneers. He collected every scrap of writing relating to his hero, and the walls of his successive dwellings at Fort Garry, Norway House, and Lachine were adorned with Napoleonic prints. And he did more; he infected many of the old factors and traders with his passion. No one writing of the Company officers during the period of the Simpson régime could give an adequate notion of their

lives and characters without mentioning the hold which the story of Bonaparte and his battles had upon their imaginations. A Chief Trader wrote in 1834 from Isle à la Crosse: "For God's sake send me Scott's next volume the moment you can. I want to see how he deals with Ney. . . . Can't you see Nap retreating from Churchill to Cumberland House?"

Such fancies threw an agreeable glamour over the steppes of Athabasca.[1]

I have permitted myself this excursus upon Simpson because of the influence the great little man had upon the fortunes of Donald Alexander Smith.

From the fact of his having the recommendation of Mr. Ellice, whose father was one of the directors, Donald Smith was in a somewhat more favourable position for employment in the Company than other applicants in Canada. The custom was that these should receive their appointment by the London Board. Some twenty years afterwards, Mr. Ellice, senior ("Old Bear" Ellice), stated to a Parliamentary Committee: "I took great care in former times to send out the best men we could find, principally from the north of Scotland, sons of country gentlemen and of farmers who had been educated in the schools and colleges of Scotland. They went out first as apprentices, then were made clerks, and then became gradually advanced to the higher positions in the service. Some of these men have lived to become great benefactors to the country. . . . Governor Simpson has taken very great interest in the matter for many years, but I think that lately it has been too much the habit to endeavour to supply the places of men who have retired by persons connected with the country, some of them half-breeds; and I doubt very much, when we look at the future security of

[1] An ingenious paraphrase of Bishop Whately's *Historic Doubt*, relative to Napoleon, was circulated about 1830 by a young clerk, Mr. Sieveright. It is entitled *Historic Doubts relating to George Simpson and Historic Certainties respecting the Fur Trade of the Northern Department.*

the country, whether that will be found to be good policy."

Whether it was good policy for the London Board to make the appointments or not is an open question; but many of the native-born so appointed became the best-known, the best-liked, and most competent officers amongst the commissioned gentlemen of the fur trade. Ellice went on to explain that the conduct of the young men in its service came "perpetually under the view first of the North-West Council and the Governor, and then under the view of the Government at home; and it is so much for the interest of all parties to have good, zealous, active men in the management of affairs at such a distance from all human society, that that is the best security for good selections." He laid stress upon the qualifications of "moral conduct and good sense" as quite indispensable, and pointed out that it "is very essential to have men who can obtain influence over the Indians; if it is found that any man at a particular post gets indolent, inattentive, or has too intimate relations with particular Indians, or if his habits are supposed in any way to interfere with his good administration of the post, he is instantly changed."

Briefly, then, the *surveillance* of the Company over the youths entering its service was very exact, the qualifications demanded were high, and the conditions stringent. A decade later, a Chief Factor of the Company could pen these words: "The history of my career may serve as a warning to those who may be disposed to enter the Hudson's Bay Company's service. They may learn that from the moment they embark in the Company's canoes at Lachine, or in their ships at Gravesend, they bid adieu to all that civilised man most values on earth. They bid adieu to their family and friends, probably for ever; for if they should remain long enough to obtain the promotion that allows them the privilege of revisiting their native land—a period of from twenty to twenty-five years—what changes does not this

life exhibit in a much shorter time? They bid adieu to all the comforts and conveniences of civilised life, to vegetate at some desolate, solitary post, hundreds of miles, perhaps, from any other human habitation save the wigwam of the savage; without any other society than that of their own thoughts, or of the two or three humble individuals who share their exile. They bid adieu to all the refinements and cultivation of civilised life, not infrequently becoming semi-barbarous—so altered in habits and sentiments that they not only become attached to savage life, but eventually lose all relish for any other."[1]

In less than a quarter of an hour Donald Smith's fate was decided. The upshot of his interview with Governor Simpson—an interview in which the youthful applicant was duly made to feel his own insignificance and the other's greatness and condescension—was that he was appointed forthwith an apprentice-clerk in the Company's service at Lachine at the munificent salary of £20 per annum.

"You will begin at once, sir," concluded the Governor, "to familiarise yourself with your future duties. Call Mr. Mactavish."

A clerk of this name was summoned, and entered the room bowing and scraping in the prescribed manner.

"Mr. Mactavish, have the goodness to take Mr. Donald Smith to the fur room and instruct him in the art of counting rat skins."

Thereupon, with a curt nod, Governor Simpson resumed the inspection of his correspondence. More than two generations later his official successor was wont grimly to relate his experience on that first day, and many subsequent days, in the Lachine fur room; how—for he disdained to wear any gloves—the skin of his hands peeled off and became raw and painful from contact with the rough hides of the musk-rats or musquashes; how, after being immured for days in solitude in the odoriferous chamber, counting

[1] *Twenty-five Years' Service in the Hudson's Bay Company.* John McLean.

thousands upon thousands of skins, a fellow-clerk visited him, and, bursting with laughter, went to summon the others to enjoy the spectacle of the gloveless greenhorn. From rats he proceeded to the peltries of beaver, marten, fox, mink, and otter, learning to distinguish the quality and value of the fur, the district whence it came, and many other particulars which are essential to fur-trading lore.

These tasks were varied by such occupations as the examination, checking, and copying of the accounts prepared by the officers of the various posts in the entire Montreal Department, of the Southern Department, and even of other departments, for Simpson was a man of merciless method, unsparing of detail when it conduced to clarity or order, no matter what pains it cost his clerks or what time it involved. All stores had to be listed, and elaborate inventories made, down to a packet of needles or a fraction of a pound of sugar. Simpson's aim was, as he himself boasted, to be able to ascertain in a moment exactly what was or should be, not only in the cash box and fur room, but in the larder of every one of the 170 posts of the Company, from Ungava to Vancouver Island, and from the Arctic Circle to Red River. He carried the practice of economy to great lengths, but, as was frequently remarked by his subordinates, not a little of his economy was of the "penny wise, pound foolish" order.

The clerks at Lachine all boarded and lodged at an establishment on the south side of the canal, kept by one Norton. Leave of absence, even on Sundays, was difficult, if not impossible to obtain, for the Governor, or his deputy, Chief Factor Keith, exercised a watchful oversight of the staff, standing towards them in a quasi-paternal relation.

During the summer the Governor-General, with his suite, paid a visit to Lachine. As the cavalcade drew near, all the clerks hastened to obtain a glimpse of the Earl; and among

them, of course, was Donald Smith, who, "surprised"—as he afterwards related—"by such splendour," neglected to doff his cap, for which Mr. Keith rebuked him. "If," wrote the Governor-General's biographer, "Lord Durham could have foreseen Lord Strathcona's services to Canada, he would have clasped hands there and then with the sturdy young Scot."

Before that autumn was very far advanced, Lachine and the Hudson's Bay Company's employees were plunged into a state of great excitement. No sooner had one rebellion been disposed of than another one burst into flame. What many shrewd observers had predicted now happened.

In a letter to his mother on November 8th, Donald wrote:

The Canadians have once again risen in rebellion, and on Sunday last martial law was proclaimed by Sir John Colborne for the second time in one year. It began in Acadie County, where hundreds of loyalists were set upon and several murdered. In Laprairie the loyalists were granted a quarter of an hour to leave the village, and the steamship *Princess Victoria*, which was at the wharf, was set afire by the rebels. At another place, called Beauharnois, a body of 400 attacked a house where our Mr. Ellice and many other ladies and gentlemen were. They were summoned to surrender, which they did after half an hour's fighting. Mrs. Ellice, Mrs. Balfour, and other ladies who had taken refuge in the cellar, were shamefully treated, and Mr. Ellice and his host, Mr. Brown, were carried off prisoners to Napierville. In Montreal there is great excitement, and there are guards before the Montreal Bank and the principal buildings. The Company's storehouses are also guarded, and the clerks and labourers enrolled as constables. You remember my writing to Mr. Lewis Grant, son of Mr. Grant, of Forres, who has a business establishment at Lachine. He was on a visit to Mr. McDonald of Chateauguay, formerly one of the Company's men. Mr. McDonald's store, I hear, has been pillaged, and both he and Mr. Grant taken prisoners and carried off.

Montreal is a scene of great martial enthusiasm, and the people put every reliance in the troops, who have been and are daily being dispatched to the scene of the outbreak. Yesterday, the 71st Regiment, part of the 93rd, and the Grenadier Guards departed by steamer, and some of us went down to see them off, their bands playing High-

land airs. It is said General Colborne and General McDonell will leave in person to-day, and this time it is certain the rebels will be shown no mercy. If it is not crushed soon, the civil and loyal population will enlist *en masse*, and you may expect to hear of my going as a soldier. I write this in haste to catch the last packet this season.

But, although the rebellion was speedily crushed, and the Hudson's Bay Company's property not attacked, there continued plenty of excitement for several months. The state trial of the prisoners came off, and was a reigning topic. Donald's friend and relative, Grant, was called upon to give evidence. On one occasion, at least, Donald mingled with some of the leading persons of Montreal. Mr. Ellice invited him to dinner out of friendship to his Uncle Stuart, and at the board he saw the celebrated Mr. Dease, and another of the old explorers, Mr. Finlayson, besides the mayor, Mr. Peter McGill.

Before Christmas came a letter from his uncle.

FORRES,
October 2, 1838.

MY DEAR NEPHEW,—And so you have finally elected to take service with the old Company! I duly received your letter of 29th July from Lachine, and I confess I was at first filled with surprise, because I had made up my mind that Upper Canada would claim you and that you would procure some situation with Mrs. Galt's interest.

However, I dare say you have, considering the deplorable conditions you describe, effected a prudent choice. The only, or at least the chief, drawback is that you are dependent upon the goodwill and caprice of one man, who is a little too much addicted to prejudices, for speedy advancement; but this is probably true in many other spheres of commercial endeavour. I wish it were in my power to assist you in his good graces; but as you know I am quitting the service and against his wish, which is by no means a present recommendation to his favour. There is, I may say, no man who is more appreciative of downright hard work coupled with intelligence or one more intolerant of *puppyism*, by which I mean carelessness and presumption. Depend upon it, the Governor soon finds means of driving that sort of youth out of the service. In fact, I think he will stand idleness sooner than the least trace of presumption. It

is his *foible* to exact not only strict obedience but deference to the point of humility. As long as you pay him in that coin you will quickly get on his sunny side and find yourself in a few years a trader at a congenial post, with promotion in sight.

You do not hint in your letter anything concerning your destination. Your sojourn at Lachine can hardly last beyond the coming winter, and instead of the West you may be sent to one of the King's Posts or to the Ungava, if the Governor still has that bee in his bonnet.

I have, thank God, got through the summer tolerably, and have spent one of the pleasantest years of my life—some reward for four decades of hard service. Life is all before you ; keep a stout heart and lay in a good stock of that desirable commodity, patience, and all will be well. If you continue at Lachine, I may see you next spring. Give my regards to Mr. Stewart, Mr. Grant, and any of my old friends you happen to meet. Your mother and sisters continue well. With every kind wish I am, my dear Donald, your affectionate uncle,

JOHN STUART.

In the course of the ensuing two years Donald Smith was sent to the Lake of Two Mountains, and to other adjacent posts, where he acquired that knowledge of French which was indispensable in the fur trade, and which stood him in good stead at Red River thirty years afterwards.

On the south shore of the beautiful Lac des Chats stood Kinnel Lodge, the residence of a Highland chief, The Macnab, a pioneer of this portion of the Upper Ottawa.

Lord Strathcona was fond of telling this story of him : On one occasion he entertained Sir George Simpson and a number of leading fur-traders of Highland origin. Amongst them was a Mackenzie, a Mactavish, a MacGillivray, a Macdonald, and so on. Some surprise was expressed that Simpson should have occupied the seat at one end of the board and a Mr. Mackenzie the other end.

At last someone inquired : " Macnab, why are ye no at the heid o' your ain table? "

The host turned upon his questioner and answered with great dignity :

"Mr. MacPherson, I'd hae ye ken weel that where The Macnab sits, there *is* the heid o' the table!"

It cannot be said that, in spite of his uncle's influence, Mr. Smith was ever a favourite of Governor Simpson. A legend used to be current in the service concerning the intercourse between the two men which would account for some of the dislike and asperity with which the High Priest occasionally visited the neophyte. Mr. Simpson had married in 1828 an English lady of considerable attractions. Their married life, although happy on the whole, was not infreqently chequered by fits of jealousy alternately on the part of the husband and the wife.

"When Mr. Smith came to Lachine in 1838," wrote one of his fellow-apprentices, "Mrs. Simpson, who always took a friendly interest in the 'indentured young gentlemen,' as they were called, was attracted by the simplicity and gentle address of the new-comer's manners. She invited him to tea; she occasionally commanded his escort on boating excursions. Once, after the Governor had returned after an absence at Red River, we heard that there had been a scene, and that in consequence young Smith, although innocent of any offence but that of obliging a lady, was in disgrace, one gentleman averring that he had heard the Governor, in a highly pitched treble, declare that he was not going to endure any 'upstart, quill-driving apprentices dangling about a parlour reserved to the nobility and gentry.' I am not sure that those last words were actually uttered by the Governor, but they represented at least the current opinion as to the purposes for which our autocrat reserved his parlour."

One day the momentous tidings reached Lachine that Governor Simpson, then in London, had been created a Knight of the Bath for his "eminent services in the cause of discovery and exploration"; and on the heels of this it was rumoured that the "Emperor of the Plains" ("Penny plains and twopence coloured," wrote Thomas

Hood on a delineation of the Emperor surrounded by his dusky subjects) contemplated making forthwith a journey round the world.[1]

It was at the end of March, 1841, that Sir George arrived at Lachine, with his retinue, which this time comprised two young English noblemen, Lord Caledon and Lord Mulgrave, who were bent on a sporting expedition to the Far West.

One morning, Donald Smith, having superintended invoicing the last of the previous season's bales in the storeroom at Lachine, was informed that the Governor wished to see him. He entered Sir George's presence, and a moment later had the pleasure of hearing him say: "You are appointed to Tadousac." The Governor paused, and then added, sharply: "It is now Monday; you will leave by the Quebec stage Wednesday morning."

With that he gave an abrupt nod and turned to his secretary and a waiting pile of papers on his desk. Smith thus dismissed, with a half-articulated "Good-day, sir," returned to the company of his fellow-clerks, who were eagerly awaiting the result of the interview. They condoled with him: he was informed that promotion in the King's Posts District was slow; that he would probably remain at Tadousac and contiguous posts for many years; that the officer in charge there was a martinet; that the posts were badly provisioned; that furs were scarce; that competition abounded; that, in short, the only advantage of Gulf service lay in a supply of Gulf seals and of salmon. Worst of all, he was told that these King's Posts, of which Tadousac was the chief, were henceforward to be regarded as preliminary to Labrador and Ungava, where it was perpetual winter, and where the hardships were such that

[1] Simpson's two octavo volumes chronicling this tour were by a former generation cynically and perhaps unjustly credited to Mr. Adam Thom, assisted by E. M. Hopkins, the Governor's secretary and companion, a gentleman well known in Montreal, and Donald Alexander Smith's immediate predecessor as the head of the Montreal office of the Company.

no constitution but the Esquimaux' could endure it; and even they died off like plague-stricken sheep.

"We rallied Mr. Smith a good deal on his appointment," wrote Edward Miles to his father. "His uncle having been the great Chief Factor Stuart, he thought he would have been sent to the neighbourhood of the Columbia."

* * * * * *

Shortly before Mr. Smith's entry on the scene, it had become a part of Governor Simpson's policy to galvanise the trade of the Gulf of St. Lawrence into a semblance of its ancient activity. In the early days of the French settlement of Canada, large tracts of wilderness had been farmed or leased to various individuals or companies, who in consequence enjoyed a monopoly of the fur trade and fisheries within the specified boundaries. One tract was termed the King's Domain. Within it were established a series of King's Posts. These extended from Port Neuf to Cape Cormorant, a distance of 270 miles, and inland to the dividing ridge between the St. Lawrence and Hudson's Bay.

Some of these trading posts were over a century old, and the early French traders had met there the tribes of Montagnais and Nascopies Indians coming down at the close of the hunting season from the North. Subsequently, many of these posts belonged to the King's Posts Company. In 1832 they were under lease to a private person at a rental of £1,200 a year, who afterwards leased them to the Hudson's Bay Company.[1]

In 1814 the whole of what is called to-day the "North Shore" was virtually a preserve of the Company. Hardly a white man was to be found between Tadousac and Belle Isle who was not an employee. Even in the summer time

[1] At this time the trading posts were nine in number—Tadousac, Chicoutimi, Lake St. John, Necobau, Mistassini, Papinachois, Muskapis, Moisie, and Seven Islands, besides Saguenay, Assuapmoussin, and Metabetshuan on Lake St. John. When the Company took over the King's Posts and fisheries 450 men were employed and 500 in the Indian trade. Shortly afterwards several other posts were built and considerable money expended.

the coast was unvisited by those fishermen and their families, who now, from Newfoundland, Gaspesia, the Magdalen Islands, and the South Shore, flock to seek their livelihood in the depths of the adjacent waters.

The four chief posts, after Tadousac, whither the Montagnais came on their return from the chase, were Godbout, Seven Islands, Mingan, and Musquarro. Tadousac, on the River St. Lawrence at its confluence with the Saguenay, is only some three hundred miles from Montreal; but the exceeding badness of the roads eastward of Quebec, the solitude and desolation of the scenery, made it, in the first half of the nineteenth century, seem very much more remote.

* * * * * *

In accordance with Governor Simpson's orders, young Donald Smith duly set out by stage-sleigh to Quebec, and on the second day after his departure reached his destination. At Baie St. Paul he delivered a message with which he had been provided to an occasional employee of the Company, who was instructed to accompany him and his effects (which consisted of a small hair-trunk, and a bag filled with provisions) as far as Tadousac. Here he donned snowshoes. He passed the night at a woodman's cabin—probably the same one that a few years later Robert Michael Ballantyne occupied on a similar journey—and duly arrived at the marvellous and mystic stream of the Saguenay, which, owing to its immense depth, never freezes. After some delay a boat was procured, and the travellers crossed to the Hudson's Bay Company's trading post.

"Unlike the posts of the north, it is merely a group of houses scattered about in the hollow of the mountains, without any attempt at arrangement and without a stockade. The post, when viewed from one of the hills in the neighbourhood, is rather picturesque; it is seen embedded in the mountains, and its white-topped houses

contrast prettily with the few pines around it. A little to the right rolls the deep, unfathomable Saguenay, at the base of precipitous rocks and abrupt mountains covered in some places with stunted pines, but for the most part bald-fronted. Up the river the view is interrupted by a large rock, nearly round, which juts out into the stream and is named 'The Bull.' To the right lies the Bay of St. Catherine, with a new settlement at its head; and above this flows the majestic St. Lawrence, compared to which the broad Saguenay is but a thread."[1]

The next seven years of Donald Smith's life was spent on the banks or in the neighbourhood of the St. Lawrence. He was at Isle Jérémie, Godbout, Bersimis, Seven Islands, and Mingan.

It was at this time of hard work and loneliness that his native character became subdued to his surroundings. I have heard him say that those years in the neighbourhood of the Saguenay made the deepest impression on his mind. Indeed, it is not too much to assert that the Saguenay left a lasting mark upon his character.

Fifty years later, in a London gallery, he was shown Böckling's powerful "The Island of Death." "Ah, yes," he said seriously, "that, apart from the trees, is exactly like the Saguenay! It recalls my young days as a fur-trader."

The routine observed at one post in the Company's service was, with slight modifications, true of all.

"When the trading parties arrived," wrote one of the Company's traders, "I had to take account of the goods returned and the robes and furs for which the rest of the outfits had been expended, also the Indian debts paid and the supplies given to servants there. And then commenced the lively scene of packing the robes and furs in the big lever fur press in the middle of the square.

"Each pack had attached to it a wooden stave, on

[1] R. M. Ballantyne, *Hudson Bay.*

which were branded its consecutive number, weight, and '67—H.B.F.Q.', meaning, Outfit 1867, Hudson's Bay, (F) Swan River district, (Q) Fort Qu'Appelle. The furs were also hung up on lines like a wash to get rid of the dust in the wind, and the larger and stronger hides beaten like the robes. The finer and weaker-skinned furs were parcelled up in strong-hided and summer bear skins, and several bundles of them made up the pack to about ninety pounds weight. Each of these fur packs was of assorted skins, and as many packs as possible made up of a uniform number of assorted skins. . . . Into each of these packs was put a slip of paper with an unpriced list of its contents and the marks and numbers before mentioned. This slip served to identify the pack, or bale, if the branded stave became detached, and also it enabled the person in charge of a shipment, which had got wet on the voyage and required to be opened and dried, to replace the furs belonging to different packs in rebaling them after being dried. The priced packing accounts of the furs, at the valuation allowed the post in general accounts, was not for the eyes of the men on the voyage with them.

"The end of each business year—called 'Outfit'—was May 31st, upon which date the inventory of everything belonging to the Company at the fort was taken. At this we all worked from dawn to dark, till everything was weighed, measured, and counted, both outside and inside the establishment.

"The post accounts had to be made out in triplicate, for the purpose of sending one copy to Montreal head-quarters, another to London, and retaining one at the post.

"Once the list of merchandise and articles in use had been made in pencil, it became my task, day and night, to recapitulate them in alphabetical order under the various headings and enter the result, duly priced, in the post account book for the Outfit. To get that book complete, so as to find the apparent gain or loss for the year's trade

before the time came for the boatmen to start for the annual voyage to York factory, took up all my time."[1]

Mr. Smith's method of keeping accounts was eccentric in the extreme—a fact which gave his successors at Mingan cause for bitter complaint. One of the latter, George Miles, came to the conclusion that the accounts had been kept in accordance with a secret code, the key of which was locked in Mr. Smith's breast. Many of the pages had a marginal note marked "Donald S.," and sometimes "Donald Smith." Many years afterwards a visitor, inspecting these accounts, found an additional memorandum below these entries, such as "Hang Donald S.," and more than once, "D—— Donald Smith! I can't make head or tail of this!—G. M."

Up to the time of Donald Smith's entry into the Company's service, beaver was the staple fur of the country; but the substitution of silk for beaver in the manufacture of hats dealt a severe blow to the beaver industry. Yet the term "castor" continued in use throughout most of the Hudson's Bay Territory to denote the unit of value when trading with the natives. The produce of a winter hunt would be estimated in "castors," and was usually about a hundred, often as low as fifty, and occasionally as high as two hundred and fifty castors. In the Montreal Department actual money or notes were used.

Of the furs the most valuable was the black fox. The hunter would receive as much as five or ten pounds for a single skin, which, however, would fetch three or four times as much in the London fur sales. The silver fox, which only differed from the black in that its coat was sprinkled with a few white hairs, then took second place; the cross fox, the red fox, the white fox, and the blue fox followed in order of value.

Lord Strathcona often recalled his first purchase of a black fox. One day news came to his bourgeois—as the

[1] Chief Trader Isaac Cowie: *The Company of Adventurers.*

officer in charge of a post was called—that a trapper named Dugas had several fine skins, but that from some fancied grievance or another had announced his intention of not selling them to the Company, but of carrying them himself to Quebec. The man who was a half-breed had established himself, with his family, about twenty miles away, and from there intended to proceed alone to civilisation.

Mr. Smith was provided with funds and instructed to be sure to acquire the furs if they were really of superior quality and could be had at a reasonable price. After a long tramp he reached Dugas's encampment. The surly and even insulting reception he met with would have daunted another man. But Smith was resolved not to lose his temper. Not a word was said about the furs. He assisted the old squaw, whom he addressed as *Madame* Dugas, to boil the pot, and cut firewood. He helped to skin a rabbit, gave the trapper tobacco, retailed news and anecdotes of mutual friends, sympathising with Dugas in his grievance against the bourgeois for whose hasty conduct he apologised. But what was of even more potent effect was a little book of *décalcomanie* pictures and a couple of sticks of barley sugar which he had thoughtfully slipped into his pocket for the children. These produced a tremendous sensation, and naturally won the heart of mother and children.

Evening came and wore on; not a syllable had been mentioned about furs or trade, save that Mr. Smith was going on five miles to another trapper's lodge up the river. At a late hour, after wishing them all a cordial good night, he rolled himself in his blanket and retired to rest. In the morning he was up betimes collecting faggots, after which he went down to the river to catch fish for breakfast. On the conclusion of the meal he announced his intention of continuing his journey. He said he had had a most pleasant time and would long remember the hospitality he had received. "Perhaps," he added, "you will still be here on my way back. If so, we may meet again—who knows?"

He then shouldered his pack and was shaking hands, when Dugas, who had been standing by in a state of sulky astonishment, cried out, " You no want my furs? "

Whereupon Smith said : " What! Monsieur Dugas, you have furs to sell? Ah, that will make Mr. H. sorry, very sorry to think that he should have lost his temper. What a pity! "

" *Tenez,*" said Dugas; and going to the lodge he brought forth a bundle and opened it, revealing several fine skins, one of which he selected and threw over his left arm, stroking it lovingly and pointing out and commenting upon its glossiness and texture.

" That is the best fox I ever trapped," he said. " This other is nearly as good. I said I would not sell them to the bourgeois and I won't. You are a young man, and perhaps you do not know the value. In Quebec I would get thirty pounds; but I do not wish to leave my family and go to Quebec. You may have them, and if your bourgeois says they are not worth twenty pounds, you may send them back to me. I will not take money now. *Voilà,*" and he pressed the bundle of skins upon the young trader.

" Wait a bit," interrupted the latter. " If this is to be business, I must take responsibility. Let me examine the furs carefully."

The upshot was that he paid the sum of £23, all the money he had upon him, and he and Dugas parted the greatest friends in the world. Dugas even accompanied him to the camp of the other trapper, and insisted in advancing the funds to pay for the latter's small catch out of what he himself had received, the money to be returned at Mr. Smith's convenience.

" Nevertheless," was Lord Strathcona's final comment, when he told the story of this little deal, " I was not without misgivings when I returned to my post and the bourgeois. He made me lay out the skins for inspection and examined them deliberately in silence, especially the mag-

nificent black fox. At last he said: 'And how much did you pay for this?' I told him eight pounds. 'Eight pounds, eh!' He examined the skin again. I could not tell from his manner whether he was pleased or angry. 'Eh, well,' he said at last, 'you didn't do so badly—for a youngster, not so badly. It's worth double that.'"

Next season, when Dugas came to the post, he sent on in advance to inquire for his friend, Mr. Donald Smith. And when, a year or two later, his young friend was transferred to another post in the Department, Mr. Smith was by no means astonished to receive a visit from Dugas, who informed him that he had suffered a terrible bereavement in the loss of his wife, but that he was shortly to be married again as soon as the priest came, and that he earnestly desired Mr. Smith to assist at the ceremony.

From Donald's letters of this period there are numerous references to his life and neighbours. The following is a passage from one he wrote to his sister Margaret:

I think you would have to travel the whole world over to find a greater contrast to the Scotch than these same Indians. If civilisation consists in frugality and foresight, then the Montagnais are far worse than dogs, who at least have sense enough to bury a bone against an evil day. In some of their lodges even before winter has properly begun their rations have come to an end. Everything about the place has been swallowed that can be swallowed, and starvation stares them in the face. They stalk in the tracks of a solitary caribou, and in the excitement forget their own hunger, but this does not make their families forget theirs. The caribou eludes them. They wander farther afield and at length bring down a bear. They cut him up and return to find their families dying or dead, which is what happened last month near Manwan Lake.

In another letter he observed:

The Indians hereabouts are careless about everything, but they do pay some attention to the welfare of the beaver. I have known of their leaving a beaver lodge only half destroyed when they might have taken the whole of the occupants.

. . . . . .

Père Leblanc related a curious thing, that Canada and Quebec are Montagnais words, the former meaning "going and coming from some place," and the latter "land here." He has often heard an Indian call out "Quebec" when he wanted the canoe to put ashore. I tried it myself on my guide to-day, and he understood at once. I made him repeat it, and to me it sounded more like "Ke-buc" or "boc." But it is an altogether different derivation from that accepted by the historians of this country.

It was a happy coincidence that the William Jordan, of whom Ballantyne speaks, should have been also one of Donald Smith's friends. "A fine-looking athletic half-breed, who had been partially educated, but had spent much more of his life among Indians than amongst civilised men."

Mr. Smith's costume at that time consisted of a red flannel shirt and *étoffe du pays,* or homespun trousers, deer-skin moccasins, and a woollen tuque. When he travelled he took a sled on which was a box, containing his blanket and kettle. He also carried a hunting-knife and a rifle, and sometimes several traps. It must be confessed that to the end of his days of service in the Company, Donald Smith remained an indifferent hand with firearms. Southey, in his *Life of Nelson,* relates that the shooting of the great sea-captain was very dangerous for his companions, "for he carried his gun upon the full cock, and the moment a bird rose he let fly without ever putting the fowling-piece to his shoulder." It was related, therefore, with great pride by his family that he once shot a partridge. Similarly, Donald Smith once shot a bear, which singular event was briefly narrated in a letter to his mother.

Moreover, although there certainly was a horse at Tadousac, and although he himself introduced these noble animals at a later day into Labrador, Donald Smith never became an expert either at riding or driving.

The following is from a letter to his mother:

All the country to the north-east of here [Tadousac] is the Montagnais country as far as Swanipie, where you meet the Nascopies and after that the Esquimaux. I have tried to ascertain how many

Montagnais or mountaineers there are. Some say 5,000, which is probably a high figure.

I was astonished to see the Montagnais in the woods teaching their children to read according to the principles they had imbibed from the missionaries. Time hangs heavily on their hands, and they turn in the family circle for entertainment to the alphabet.

A man arrived at the post yesterday suffering from night blindness. This is a curious disease of the optic nerve. Those afflicted with it can see well enough in the daytime, but at night the strongest artificial light is useless to them except perhaps a flash of lightning. If darkness overtakes a night-blind man he might just as well stop instantly on his journey unless he wants to run the risks attendant upon groping in the dark over unfamiliar ground. This is common amongst the lumbermen at Chicoutimi. They say it comes from eating too much fat pork in winter, but it probably has other causes. The eyes are not inflamed, and the strength of vision does not seem to be weakened in daytime, but at night, with a candle in front of them, they remain stone blind, and continue so until they leave the camp and alter the character of their food.

Many of the Roman Catholic missionaries in the district became Mr. Smith's intimate friends. He came to know and correspond with PP. Roy and Paquet, as he did afterwards with PP. Renaud, Babel, and Ferland, and a generation later it was a pious and earnest missionary priest, the venerable Père Lacombe, who became one of his warmest friends in the Canadian North-West.

As early as 1844 he wrote:

You must not be surprised to hear that I am very friendly with the Catholic missionaries of this country. The Company's policy has always been well disposed towards these brave men; and I am so on personal grounds. The priest at L'Anse St. Jean is a kindly young man, who has suffered many hardships and is ready to suffer more without complaint. I owe a good deal of my proficiency in French and many hours of companionship to him.

Later, we shall find him making overtures to the Moravian missionaries of Labrador. There are several references to Mr. Smith in the Moravian reports, as in those of Père Babel and others addressed to the *Société de la Propagation de la Foi.*

Godbout, another place where Mr. Smith was stationed, was called after the captain of the Company's sloop of that name and was established in 1821. In 1846 he wrote :

I went on a visit to Egg Island to-day, where in 1711 Admiral Sir Hovenden Walker's fleet was wrecked and eleven hundred men perished. I had the story of this catastrophe from Père Robert down to the last detail. The fleet was on its way to capture Quebec when a storm arose one August night and dashed it to pieces. The French regarded it as an intervention of Providence and rechristened their church at Quebec " Notre Dame des Victories " after the event. The huge rock upon which the vessels stranded is to this day called " Pointe aux Anglais." Several cannon have been dragged up here, and one is at Mingan. Other articles have been washed up or found at low tide. The island is still a very dangerous place for ships, and should have a light.[1]

From Bersimits he wrote :

This river Bersimits is about 250 miles long, but extraordinarily narrow at its mouth—an arpent and a quarter. Fifteen miles up you come across the first portage. It is full of salmon and trout and brochet, but owing to the rapids very hard to catch with the fly.

Some of his observations on Indian customs are interesting :

A Montagnais will take a piece of birch bark and mark down a few characters in his own language and roll it up and suspend it from a tree somewhat isolated from the rest in the forest, along a route more or less frequented by hunters. It may hang there for a week or a month or two, but some day a Montagnais will come along and see it and read the address, such as Bersimits or Mingan or Musquarro or Nascopie, and if he is going that way will carry it along the route and again suspend it until another sees it, and by degrees it reaches its destination.

The great preoccupation of the Indian is not to be idle or to amuse himself or to hunt or to fish, but to find food. They would never hunt at all if they were not forced to do it by fear of hunger. Supply him with plenty of provisions, enough to last all winter, and there will be few martens trapped. When I saw a mountaineer going off with four or five barrels of flour in his canoes, I knew he would do little until that was eaten up. Of economy and frugality they

[1] One was erected there in 1870, largely as a result of Mr. Smith's representations on the subject.

know nothing. They live from hand to mouth, and never can tell of what their dinner to-morrow will consist until they trap or shoot it. It may be bear or partridge or caribou or beaver or salmon. The flesh satisfies their hunger and the skins—a secondary consideration—they sell to the trader.

The Company had had a post at Mingan since the middle of the eighteenth century. Owing to certain difficulties with the Mingan seigneur, they established a post first of all on Havre island, the largest of the islets which close the port; and this is still the property of the Company. There is a building a century and quarter old yet in use.

It was at Mingan that a great calamity overtook Donald Smith in the burning down of his house at the post. He was away at the time the fire broke out, and on his return found that the staff had flung themselves zealously into the task of saving his personal belongings, rather than those belonging to the Company. It shows a curious trait in his character that he at once proceeded to fling his own clothing, books, and other effects upon the flames, remarking :

" Let them go, too, if the Company's goods have gone ! "[1]

Under his superintendence another house was erected, and it remains there to this day for the visitor to see. The post is little changed. The little Roman Catholic chapel—one of the first established in Canada—still survives.

No account, however summary, of Donald Smith's life at this period should omit mention of his reading, for arduous and occasionally prolonged as his duties were, they still left abundant leisure for the perusal of such books and newspapers as these more or less remote posts could furnish.

We find him referring to as having read, amongst others, Plutarch's *Lives,* Benjamin Franklin's *Correspondence,* Tomline's *Life of Pitt,* and many old volumes of the *Edinburgh Review.*

It was by chance copies of the Montreal *Gazette* and the

[1] I am indebted to Mr. W. D. B. Scott, afterwards in charge of the post, for this anecdote.—B. W.

Quebec *Mercury* that he kept in touch with the outside world, and there are many references in his early letters to contemporary affairs in Canada and Britain, a knowledge of which he had derived, many months later, from the well-worn *Gazettes*, which, passing from hand to hand, and from post to post, were read and re-read by the young clerk who even at that time, even in the solitude and silence of the bush, was keeping himself in the current of affairs.

While at Mingan, Mr. Smith's eyes, which had suffered from snow-blindness, began to give him great pain and anxiety. An old Indian to whom he showed them alarmed him by assuring him he would soon be totally blind. In November, 1847, having written thrice to the Governor on the subject of his eyesight, he made up his mind that the urgency of the case would brook no further delay, and so took passage in the schooner *Marten* for Montreal. On the evening of his arrival he thought it prudent to report himself immediately to Sir George Simpson and explain why he had broken the rules of the service.

Simpson was at dinner at his mansion at Lachine[1] when the butler announced the arrival of Mr. Donald Smith, of Mingan.

"Bid him wait in the library," said the Governor. And while the young man waited, he dispatched a message to his own medical adviser asking him to step in for a few moments and give a friend the benefit of his counsel. He then appeared to his visitor, and in his sternest manner demanded what right he had to leave his post without leave.

"I am threatened with blindness, sir," was the reply. "I addressed several letters to you asking leave at the close of the season to come up to Montreal and consult a surgeon; but was not favoured with a reply."

"Threatened with blindness? Pooh, pooh!" declared Simpson. "However, we will look into this." Turning

[1] The walls of this mansion are now incorporated in those of a convent opposite. Close to the canal is a small stone building, the last remaining vestige of the Company's offices at Lachine.

to the butler, he said : " Serve dinner to Mr. Donald Smith. Afterwards, we will see what the doctor has to say in the matter."

After dinner, for which, hungry though he was, Donald had little relish, he appeared before his host and the doctor, who, having been made acquainted with all the circumstances of the case, made a rapid examination, and while providing a remedy, declared that there was nothing serious the matter with the young man's visual organs.

" No danger of blindness? " asked the Governor.

" Oh, dear, no, Sir George—none whatever," returned the doctor.

" Then," continued the autocrat, more sternly than ever, although aware that the doctor had already suggested the very treatment for which Smith had made his journey, " this appears to me a serious case of indiscipline. It is now eight o'clock "—here he took out his watch. " I will give you thirty minutes to leave Montreal for your new post."

" My new post? " faltered Smith.

" Yes ; you are appointed to the Esquimaux Bay District and will report yourself forthwith to Mr. Nourse at North-West River Post. There will be no stage available at Quebec for Bersimits. You will proceed on foot via Seven Islands and Mingan to St. Augustine, and from there overland. Good night, sir." And the inflexible and inexorable Governor turned on his heel.

For a moment the young man hesitated, the spirit of rebellion surging within him. In after years he asked a friend what course he would have pursued at such a juncture. The friend did not hesitate.

" I should have told Sir George Simpson to go straight to h——l, and to take the Hudson's Bay Company with him," he responded.

Lord Strathcona's eyes twinkled under his shaggy brows. " Well," he said slowly, " I, too, felt like that for a moment. Then I said to myself, ' If Governor Simpson can

bring himself to give such an order as that, I can bring myself to carry it out.' And I went."

The journey was in bitter weather, slow and tedious owing to the snowdrifts. At Bersimits, Smith procured two Montagnais guides, but they were both quite incompetent, and were only tempted by the bribe of pork and flour which Mr. Smith promised them on reaching Seven Islands, for they had not departed with their fellows on the Northern hunt, had long since run short of provisions, and the agent at Bersimits had lost patience with them. Paul, the younger of the pair, was a good-looking fellow of eighteen, already married and a father.

On the fourth day they lost their way in a blinding storm, but after resting two days in the woods beside a fire which they had kindled with great difficulty, they pressed on. In some manner they bore to the north and struggled on without making Seven Islands, where Mr. Smith had intended a halt. The situation soon became serious. Usually, the Indian plan of discovering the cardinal points of the compass—i.e. by cutting off a section of the bark of a tree, the thickest portion indicating the north—can be relied upon. But where a route is of necessity tortuous, or where trees are scarce or immature, or the traveller inexpert, the test fails to help him, and he may drift slowly but surely to destruction. Moreover, Mr. Smith began to suffer from frozen feet, and his eyes, in spite of the remedies he carried, again gave him acute pain.

A more serious danger lay in the exhaustion of the food supply. Beyond a ptarmigan or two, they were able to shoot nothing. Gradually the trio grew weaker, and at the end of ten days Paul complained of giddiness and exhaustion, and declared that he could not march another step. That night they had a little moss for supper, boiled with the skin of a beaver. Mr. Smith and the elder Indian spent the next day reconnoitring for food. They returned towards nightfall with the remains of a marten to find Paul very ill in-

deed. The night was bitterly cold; the fire went out, and Paul died. In the morning his companions wrapped him carefully in his blanket and suspended the body in a tree, according to the Montagnais custom.

Six days later the pair of survivors arrived at Mingan, where Mr. Verrall was in charge, in a state little to be envied. Although they had not actually starved, their food latterly had been raw and unsavoury.

Verrall and his wife extended a cordial welcome to their visitor and a warm repast was prepared, but the young clerk's troubles were not yet over. It was now the middle of January, and he had to push on somehow to St. Augustine River in order to reach the trail leading to Esquimaux Bay, hundreds of miles to the north. Again he set out and reached Mashquarro. The bourgeois there, Mr. Robert Hamilton, saw that the young traveller was utterly worn out, and, without appearing to disregard Governor Simpson's orders, resolved to keep Mr. Smith through the winter. Smith could not proceed without guides, and one of the post Indians, Joseph Obe, was dispatched in search of them, but they, as was to be expected, were not forthcoming until the approach of spring.

Meanwhile, Donald enjoyed necessary rest and recuperation for a few weeks, and at the end of April, 1848, a couple of guides and a canoe having been procured, he went up the St. Augustine River. After three weeks' travel he struck into the Grand River, crossed Goose Bay, and duly reported himself to Chief Trader William Nourse at North-West River, at that time the chief of the Labrador posts of the Company.

CHAPTER IV

PROMOTION AND MARRIAGE (1848-53)

LABRADOR, that vast, dreary and solitary plateau, is not all dreariness and solitude. Into those forbidding battlements of ice and rock a great arterial channel penetrates for 120 miles to receive rivers and rivulets emanating from the very bosom of the wilderness.

A generation before Donald Smith's day this wide estuary was known as Invucktoke (or Sea-Cow) Bay, from the uncouth animal then occasionally to be seen about its shores. A few years later this animal had altogether disappeared, and the estuary is now known variously as Esquimaux Bay, Hamilton Inlet, and Gros Water Bay. The channel is forty miles wide at the entrance, gradually contracting until the "Narrows" are reached fifty miles inland, when it expands from the width of a mile and a half to a veritable inland sea.

It has been compared to an hour glass, this great Esquimaux Bay, with its narrow waist through which the tide ebbs and flows.

Between it and the shores of Ungava Bay stretches a great dividing ridge. Across this barrier the Esquimaux tribes of the north and south rarely, if ever, passed. Each became, therefore, a separate race, and this had of yore been the meeting place of the southern Esquimaux. The latter—for at least half a century previously—had ceased to dwell in ice houses, to dress wholly in furs, and carry their children in the hoods of their *kossaks;* they had largely adopted European dress and many of the white man's habits and customs. They favoured Invucktoke Bay because it afforded them in abundance all the things they coveted—

whales, seals, cod-fish, salmon, trout, herring and numerous sea-fowl; and now the surviving remnant of their race resorted thither owing to the presence of the posts of the Hudson's Bay Company.

To the traveller, who has been days in the contemplation of the grim scenery of the Labrador Coast, a sail up Esquimaux Bay must always remain a memorable experience. The very atmosphere, shaking off the sea fog, takes on an empurpled warmth. In the distance scores of islands emerge vaguely through the haze; and, on nearer view, some of them are seen to be overgrown with dwarf spruce and dark green clumps of alder. Moving westward, the high wooded bluffs, rocks, hills and distant mountains replace the bare, dark and featureless shore. On the left is a lofty wooded peak known as Mount Nat, up whose slopes the deer flee in summer to escape their insect tormentors.

As the traveller continues his westward course the scenery changes constantly; the trees take on large growth and the country becomes more generally wooded; whilst fifty or sixty miles away loom up Mealy Mountains, their snow-clad summits gleaming in the sun. Close at hand in the water may frequently be seen a whale, blindly following the tide and spouting as he rises; seals emerging from the waves to stare at the little ship, then disappearing; and grampuses frolicking derisively; whilst in the air strange sub-Arctic birds hover, an easy prey to the most inexpert gunner—saddle-back gulls, bottle-nosed ducks, eiders, hagden, auks, puffins, gannets and sea pigeons.

At the entrance to the Narrows—the neck of the hour-glass—the hills on either side tower to the height of a thousand feet, forming a great spruce-clad, shadowy portal. Through this channel, with irresistible force, sweep the waters of the vast inland Melville Lake. More than one frail ship, unable to cope with this mad, tempestuous rush of water, has shared the fate of the *Cleopatra* man-of-war and been dashed through this foaming space to destruction. All

shipping, therefore, must come and go with the tide, save small craft, which can take advantage of the eddies and the favourable breeze. Half-way through this foam-splashed gorge is visible the Hudson's Bay Company's post of Rigolet (so named from the adjoining rivulet by the French-Canadian traders who built it in 1791), with the Company's red flag floating from the usual tall staff fixed in the ground before the agent's house.

There are a number of buildings belonging to the post, comprising dwellings for the officers and servants, as well as store-houses for furs, sales shops, cooper's shop, oil house, fish house, packing house and oven house. Two of the buildings erected by a couple of eighteenth-century French traders from Montreal still survived, the nucleus of the establishment, and which became the property of the MacGillivrays and the North-West Company.

After leaving Rigolet, bold wooded bluffs continue through the Narrows. At the terminus is a cluster of islands, abreast of which the eye sweeps over a broad sea. The huge Mealy Mountains run parallel with the southern shore of this sea—curious, bizarre, ugly, upstanding masses which have been compared to a succession of colossal thumbs or gigantic haycocks, half tumbled over by sportive Titans. One of these, a thousand feet high, called the Broken Mountain, is shaped like a huge inverted bowl, rent asunder from top to bottom. Forty miles from Rigolet is another such hill or mountain, probably cavernous, for those dwelling in the vicinity assert that the footsteps of a man walking upon its top create an echo audible for a great distance. Farther on stands an isolated peak, to which Mr. Smith gave the title of the "Clerk," from its resemblance to a cloaked figure, seated in the posture of writing. Opposite this point Melville Lake is studded with three score or more islands, and a few miles farther on, after rounding the low headland, a small cove unexpectedly appears.

Here the North-West River empties itself, and a mile

and a half up is the long line of buildings belonging to the Company's trading post. In 1848 there were only five or six buildings in all. Ten miles to the north stands a prominent mountain peak, known as Makaumé, forming a conspicuous landmark throughout the region. The mountaineers (Montagnais) call it *Pootakabooshkow* ("That which rises up"), and invest it with supernatural attributes, as other tribes do with the rock at Mistassini. When passing they never point at or refer to it, believing that, should they do so, they would invite storms or other misfortunes.

Donald Smith himself was always, from his boyhood days, very susceptible to superstition. This strain in his character was inherited, no doubt, from Gaelic ancestors. He strongly believed in "second sight"; and his own experience furnished numerous instances of prevision of events.

In January, 1841, he dreamed that he saw his elder and favourite sister, Margaret, lying stretched on her death-bed, her arms extended as if to take a final farewell of him, while her lips formed mutely a heart-rending, "Donald, oh Donald!" At the time he had no idea that his sister was ill. Next morning, however, he said to his friend, James Anderson: "My sister Margaret is dead." Some months later he received a letter from his mother. It told him that his sister had passed away on January 12th—the very day, allowing for the difference in longitude, he had dreamed of her death.

North-West River, at the time of which I write, was the chief station of the Company on the Atlantic sea-board. And it was to this post that Donald Alexander Smith was introduced at the end of his long journey overland from the St. Lawrence. In a small wooden house,[1] distinguished by the tall staff before its door, dwelt Chief Trader William Nourse.

[1] Afterwards occupied by Mr. Smith, and still surviving in a dilapidated state as "Lord Strathcona's house."

This old officer had had a long and varied experience in the Company's service, and was then on the point of retirement. Mr. Smith discovered that he had already departed for Rigolet to meet the Company's annual ship from Montreal, which discharged its cargo and passengers at that post.

When Mr. Smith arrived at North-West River the Nascopies had already come down from the interior with their furs, and were dwelling in the numerous skin-covered lodges arranged in a wide circle near the post. For a long period the Nascopies had been the deadly foe of the Esquimaux, whom they held in contempt and with whom they waged a constant war. Very little was known of their origin or their abiding place. Travellers had not then penetrated to their retreat to learn their customs and reveal them to the world, and until 1840 they had held no intercourse with the whites. They were the simplest of savages. They believed in a Supreme Being, the author of all good; and also in a Bad Spirit. And they offered sacrifices to both. Their women were abject slaves. Polygamy prevailed among them, the man marrying as many wives as he could support. The aged were killed, the nearest relative being appointed executioner.

The establishment of the Company's trading posts caused many of the Nascopies to become partially civilised and eager for trade, and in the early summer they repaired to Fort Nascopie and North-West River in canoes laden with the spoils of their winter hunt. After spending a week or ten days in bartering their furs and pelts for the Company's goods, they would re-embark in their birchen fleets and be seen no more until the following spring.

Altogether this tribe scarce numbered more than a thousand souls, but owing to a terrible mortality which a little later overtook them, their number in 1860 was reckoned at no more than five hundred. They spoke a dialect of the Cree language, almost identical with that spoken on the North Pacific coast. In person they were generally tall, straight, graceful, of light complexion and pleasing features.

By some it was credited that these Labrador Nascopies had a tinge of French blood in their veins. They possessed to an even greater extent than other savages a passionate fondness for dress. Their native garments were of softest buckskin, moulded to the figure, decorated with brilliant pigments, and embroidered in silk with designs representing birds, flowers, and natural objects. A scarlet sash, with flowing ends reaching to the knees, was worn over the tunic about the waist. The squaws were attired in petticoats and trousers of a cut and quality much inferior to their lords and masters. On their heads they wore tall, conical caps of bright-hued flannel, ornamented with beads and sometimes bears' and eagles' claws. Their style of dressing the hair, too, differed from that adopted by other tribes. The women parted their hair behind and drew it forward, dressing it in oval-shaped bunches on either side of the head. The men wore their hair in queues, decorated with beads, and terminating in a bead tassel. An indispensable article of dress was the long fur gauntlet, which was held in place by a thong passed over the shoulders.

Gradually a number came to adopt the dress of the whites; but they countenanced only the finest cloth, and that of the gaudiest colours. Chief Thomas Chimo, for example, who succeeded Chief Paytabais, was partial to lace. He is described as a man of fifty years, short in stature, and boasting of but one arm, the other having been shot off by accident. On that occasion he was, with true Indian stoicism, his own surgeon, amputating the mangled limb with his hatchet.

Nomadic in their habits, the Nascopies rarely lingered for more than a week, even in mid-winter, in one spot. In every direction they traversed the snow-clad forests, setting their traps wherever game seemed prevalent, or tracking the caribou in his mossy feeding ground. In these quests their worldly goods were hauled upon sleds, and the party marched in single file, the better to make a beaten track, the post of leader being taken in rotation. The sleds were

fashioned of thin birchen boards, turned up in front like a toboggan. At night, when the wanderers pitched camp, they thrust their legs into capacious bags lined with eiderdown, which ensured them a warm slumber. The spoils of the chase were equally divided. A successful hunt was followed by a feast lasting four or five days, until a disgusting surfeit produced exhaustion. For small game bows and arrows were used, but for the larger animals the Nascopies had by this time adopted firearms, in the use of which they soon became singularly expert.

The native deer, or caribou, were as indispensable to the Nascopies as were the bison or buffaloes to the western tribes or as seals to the Esquimaux. Caribou, however, were very numerous, ranging in herds from the coast of Labrador to the interior and back again, following regular routes of travel at certain seasons of the year. Thus the sagacious hunter was nearly always able to trace them to their haunts.

With the Nascopies Donald Smith was destined to become as intimately acquainted as he had previously become familiar with the Montagnais or mountaineers, and amongst them he came to number many personal friends. A treatise which he wrote upon them in the winter of 1851-52 has unfortunately been lost,[1] but there are many passages in his letters and reports concerning the Nascopies.

After a brief sojourn at North-West River Mr. Smith departed to report himself to his superior officer, in company with a clerk named James Grant, leaving another clerk, Joseph MacPherson, in charge of the post. He arrived at Rigolet on the 3rd of July, 1848, a few days before the arrival of the Company's supply ship, which set the place in a state of bustle and confusion.

"This," wrote a visitor a dozen years later,[2] "is the liveliest portion of the year at the Company's post. Long days

[1] It was burnt, together with many of Lord Strathcona's early papers, at the Board of Trade building fire in Montreal some years ago.

[2] Charles Hallock, now (1915) Dean of the Smithsonian Institute, Washington.

of active labour and nights of mirth and gaiety, from which brief hours are snatched for repose, fill up the fleeting respite of a rigorous winter. Esquimaux *toupiks* dot the shore, swarming with the swarthy tenants who have assembled to barter the season's catch of salmon, sealskins and oil. The few white settlers on the bay are here for a like purpose. Trade goes briskly on in the long salesroom of the shop.

"The Company's vessel has carried her annual freight of 'returns' to the *depôt* at Cartwright, and is now here awaiting a fair wind to convey the yearly supplies to the 'North-West' station and interior posts. A few Nascopies have straggled down from above in full panoply of beads and buckskin. There is Michelet, an old Canadian *voyaguer,* with his Esquimaux wife and seven children, each of them, from the mother to the babe, gifted with an extra pair of perfectly formed fingers and toes—a six-fingered family—and Oliver, an Orkneyman, one of the hardiest and most trustworthy of the Company's servants, and the best dog driver on the bay. He has driven from Rigolet to North-West River and back, 120 miles, in eighteen hours, changing dogs but once."

* * * * * *

Besides the Nascopies, a few Esquimaux frequent the post at Rigolet, but they are a perishing race, in spite of the efforts of the Moravian missionaries. They were even then rapidly diminishing—so rapidly that it was easy to mark, within a generation, the progress towards extinction of a nation (the great *Innuit*, i.e. the people) that once controlled more than five thousand miles of sea coast, and were wont to consider themselves as numerous as the waves of the sea. There has always been much speculation concerning the origin of this people. The fact that the skins of their infants are fair and white, which grease, smoke, and filth eventually darken, proves that they have nothing in common with the other native races of this continent. They are probably allied to the Lapps.

That a family of Esquimaux actually crossed to Labrador from the north shore of Hudson's Strait, in 1839, on a raft constructed of drift-wood, as stated by Chief Trader MacLean, then resident at Ungava Bay, suggests that these people originally came from Asia. At any rate, it is certain they are a people of superior intelligence, with a written language, identical from Labrador to Behring Straits. In 1848 there were probably as many as a thousand of them living south of the Ungava district, but in 1860 the entire Esquimaux population of Labrador was estimated by the head of the Moravian Mission at scarce more than this number.

By general consent the influence of the Moravians was beneficial. Polygamy, for instance, once common, had become rare. An old patriarch of the bay, known as "Ike the Mormon," had, in Mr. Smith's time, five wives; but his case was exceptional, for marriages were contracted under the Moravian ritual, and Ike's marital relation must have been assumed without sanction. Moreover, large numbers were saved by the Moravians from starvation. They were taught to be industrious and provident.

At each of the four mission stations the quaint, two-storey, red-painted chapel rose from a cluster of native huts. There were gardens where the more hardy vegetables were raised, a store, and workshops for the native tradesmen. Whatever provisions the Esquimaux procured were placed at the missionaries' disposal, and by them distributed in the best manner for the general good. Waste and improvidence were thus guarded against. In times of scarcity the Brethren opened their own stores for distribution. The product of the winter hunt and summer fisheries were disposed of in trade, the profits accruing being thrown into the general fund.

The work of the Moravians very soon excited Mr. Smith's interest, and it was an account of their rude farm at Hebron that turned his attention to the agricultural

possibilities of Esquimaux Bay, and ultimately to his own model farm and dairy at North-West River.

At Rigolet that summer Mr. Smith made the acquaintance of Mr. Henry Connolly, the clerk in charge of the post, destined to be a life-long friend and his own successor as agent in Esquimaux Bay.[1]

A decade before, John MacLean had established for the Company the interior post of Nascopie, at some 300 miles to the west, and in the late summer an annual journey was made from North-West River to Fort Nascopie. Two *batteaux* set out, heavily laden with the supplies, and each manned by eight stalwart men. After a spell of smooth water, the *portages* began; fifty miles of the great dividing ridge separating the waters that flow north and west of Hudson's Bay, and south to the River and Gulf of St. Lawrence, had to be climbed. The merchandise was strapped upon the backs of the *voyageurs,* 180 pounds to each man, who, climbing the steep ascent with comparative ease, transferred his burden to the canoes previously carried to the slack water above. No fewer than twenty falls and rapids had to be passed in the journey, each involving a *portage.* One of these cataracts was among the highest in the world, known as the Grand Fall. It is 270 miles from the coast, and was discovered by Chief Trader MacLean in 1838.

Three miles above the fall the river suddenly contracts from a width of 600 to 100 yards; then, rushing along its gloomy channel in a continuous, foaming rapid, again contracts to a width of 50 yards, leaps through a cloud of ever-rising spray into a chasm four hundred feet deep, and then roars and foams through zigzag walls of rock, 300 feet high, for a distance of thirty miles. The roar of the Grand Fall can be heard twelve miles away, and the spray that rises from the chasm can be seen that distance in

[1] Mr. Connolly was the son of Chief Factor William Connolly, one of the pioneers in New Caledonia. He entered the Company's service in 1837 and left it in 1875 with the rank of Chief Trader. He died in 1900.

clear weather. A detour of twenty miles through a chain of lakes and streams was found necessary to circumvent the Grand Fall. The whole journey occupied a month.

Fort Nascopie is just half-way to Ungava Bay. The Company formerly had a post called Fort Chimo, upon a river of that name, near the bay, but Sir George Simpson abandoned it as unprofitable. It was reserved to Chief Trader Donald Smith to re-open this post and the whole of the abandoned Ungava district. Northward to Ungava Bay the character of the country is distinguished by alternate belts of heavy timber and bare hills, interspersed with lakes, rivers, and streams of varied extent. From Fort Nascopie there are trails leading to the Company's territory in the Far West, and there were several in Mr. Smith's day who had actually traversed the vast distance between North-West River and the Red River of the north.

In 1850 Mr. Smith wrote:

> We here inland have little reason to complain. Although the coast is barren we are favoured with trees such as spruce and larch, birch and rowan, fir and willow—not at all scrubby, but many of a girth sufficient for ship's timber. Then we have an abundance of berries and of many varieties—hertz or whortleberries, bilberries, cranberries, raspberries, bake-apples, and teaberries. We can, if we choose, make our tea of the Labrador tea-plant and our beer by boiling the tips of young spruce foliage and flavouring it with molasses. . . .
>
> For one month in summer we have salmon and excellent trout all the year round, catching the latter in winter by cutting a hole in the ice and letting down a hook baited with a piece of raw meat. Down the bay come great shoals of kippling every year, which are pursued by devouring cod, which latter fish, of course, forms the mainstay of the Labrador fishery. When what is called the kippling school appears, every fisherman on the coast is on the *qui vive* with traps and seines, often going without sleep for days together.
>
> The principal food animals here are the caribou and the black bear. As to our game birds we have partridges—i.e. willow grouse, the Canada goose and several sorts of duck.

When winter came there were traps to set and many long tramps on snowshoes, and occasionally with the dogs, to visit them. The very first winter, his fellow-clerk, Joseph MacPherson, was sent on a mission to a distant band of trappers; he lost his way and eventually came to the Grand Fall, the second white man, it is believed, to behold that marvel. MacPherson had a narrow escape from perishing of hunger, but managed to hold out until he could gain Fort Nascopie.

Both at Rigolet and North-West River, during the busy season, Mr. Smith—to use his own words—" never seemed to find time to sleep."

What a clerk of a somewhat later day wrote was also true of his time:

" I was kept continually on the move, attending to the packing account, telling the men whose provisions were weighted how much they came to at so many pence per pound, and then marking down each article they got in exchange, with frequent pauses to tell the Indian how much in pounds, shillings and pence he had left. The same with furs, merely exchanged for their value in goods; for our traders and interpreters found it difficult to calculate in the complicated pounds, shillings and pence standard which had recently been introduced, instead of the well and easily understood Made Beaver standard. Whoever was the Hudson's Bay official who superseded the simple ' skin way ' for the ' money way ' of trading with Indians, he certainly gave us no end of torment and trouble. It was alleged that the object of the change was to meet competition by paying the Indians full value for their products, and do away with the old-established system of giving them gratuities in the way of ammunition and other articles, including, I think, ' regales ' of rum, for Swain River was not on the Hudson's Bay Company's list of teetotal districts.

" Now, an Indian was never satisfied with a trade which was a fair and exact change at the fixed prices of the time,

until he had received 'something for nothing' on the top of the transaction. It did not matter if a trader raised the prices of furs and lowered the prices of goods to him on the distinct understanding that no present was to be expected or given, the Indian always insisted on that 'something for nothing' so dear to all man and womankind, at the end of the barter. So what between the elaborate lecture on the mysteries of British sterling currency without the aid of the never visible actual coin for demonstrative purposes, which I had to deliver on nearly every important trade in which I took part, and the absolute failure of the exposition to enlighten the Indian on it, I had many a vexing hour, and in explaining, too, that it was beyond my power to alter the new and odious system."[1]

It was the custom amongst the traders when furs were brought in by the Indians, to examine them hastily and pitch them into a corner. Lord Strathcona used to recall that when the elder Connolly became transferred to the Montreal department, where paper money was in vogue, he found great difficulty in accustoming himself to its use. On one occasion a man entered the store, and purchasing articles to the amount of twenty shillings, tendered a one-pound note, which Connolly absent-mindedly threw into a corner along with the peltries, where it was luckily found next morning.

* * * * * *

Having arrived safely—despite his many perilous adventures—at the distant post to which Governor Simpson had appointed him, Donald Smith lost no time in exploring his surroundings.

Just across the water from the mouth of the North-West River, on the south side of Lake Melville, is a small bay, into which empties the Kenamou and Kenamich rivers. The former stream is much the larger, and drains an extensive area of the highlands to the south-west. It

[1] Trader Isaac Cowie.

SIR GEORGE SIMPSON, THE "KING OF THE FUR TRADE," ON A TOUR OF INSPECTION

is so rapid and full of shoals as to be practically unnavigable. Above North-West River the inlet has been silted up by sand brought down and deposited by the Hamilton River, which flows into the head of the inlet. Extending from the north shore, just above North-West River, is a long, narrow point, which separates the shallows from the deeper portion of the inlet, the upper part being called Goose Bay. This is twenty miles long, and at its head it receives a small river, famous for the large brook trout that have been taken there in the fall of the year. Here Donald Smith was wont to fish, and many a finny prize rewarded his patience and skill in the days before the increase of the Company's salmon business detained him until the dawn of winter at Rigolet or Indian Harbour.

In Lake Melville was situated Gull Island, which enjoyed much local fame by reason of a native romance and tragedy. It seems that a young and good-looking half-breed laid siege to the heart of an Esquimaux maiden. The girl was won, but not so the parents. The result was that the lovers took flight, crossed the bay in a boat, and landed upon Gull Island. Here they wandered together gathering wild flowers. While thus engaged, a storm rose, and the placid bay became a foaming sea. Observing this, the doting pair hurried to the spot where they had moored their boat. It was gone, wrenched away from its moorings. This was a discovery agonising indeed. To attempt to swim the lake, even if the Esquimaux were skilled in that art, would have been fatal at any time. Death by starvation, therefore, was inevitable, and the lovers evidently perished in each other's arms.

The following winter the bay was frozen, and the girl's father was driving by with his dog-team, when the dogs unaccountably refused to pass the island. In vain the driver used his whip. The howling beasts turned aside from the track and soon began pawing in the snow. A shrivelled arm was disclosed, and gradually the bodies of

the lovers were disclosed to view. Near-by was the broken thong of deer's hide which had served as the boat's painter to a rock, and, lo, the mystery of their sad fate was revealed.

At the end of his first year, Donald Smith wrote home to his mother, then recently widowed:

MacPherson and I had an adventure to-day in the woods. We heard piercing yells and hastening towards the spot found a rather pretty Esquimaux girl who had sprained her ankle. Her attempt to walk had only made it worse; it had swollen to about twice its normal size. There was nothing to do but to carry her nearly a mile into the Esquimaux camp. You would hardly believe that this was a very repugnant task; as a matter of fact, none in my experience was ever more so. The odour of these people when they are sufficiently animated is not very pleasant; the effluvia of this young lady was really overpowering, and we were glad when our job was over, and we deposited her with her parents. Even then we were considerably delayed first by explanation, which at first they refused to believe, and afterwards by their gratitude. There was a good deal of merriment when we returned to the house, for the others had somehow got wind of the affair.[1]

This was not Smith's only adventure in which a damsel of the native races was concerned, for in 1852—the year, by the way, in which he was appointed Chief Trader—he was travelling some miles from North-West River, in the wake of a party of Nascopies who were suspected of carrying off some merchandise which did not belong to them, when he came across the recumbent figure of a young girl asleep, as he supposed, on the ground, which was lightly covered with snow.

On closer examination his fears were aroused: the poor creature was in the last stage of exhaustion. He administered brandy, and she revived sufficiently to let him know that she had been seized by a terrible illness, accompanied

[1] On another occasion he wrote: "Unless you have actually been a witness of their table performances you would not believe what an Esquimaux family can consume at a single sitting. They will eat such a breakfast as a hearty white man will put away, and this merely as a relish. I have seen one man drink eleven cups of coffee, each with several spoonfuls of sugar as an accompaniment to a single meal of bread, pan-cakes, bear's meat, half-raw fish, and other delicacies."

by delirium, in the midst of which she had been abandoned by her father and the rest of the party. How long she had been lying thus in the open, exposed to the elements without care or nourishment, was never known. She was brought to the factory, but after lingering for eight days, she died, and was buried in the adjacent burying ground.

This story furnishes a striking example of the callousness which is sometimes exhibited by nomadic tribes. The excuse offered by the parents of this luckless girl was their fatalism. They had left the girl to the mercies of Manitou, who would do what he thought best. But it is more than probable that they suspected smallpox or some almost equally dreaded disease.

Donald Smith, who had not yet completed his twenty-eighth year, was still in the first weeks of what was destined to be his long service in Labrador, when, a thousand miles away, across the plateau, midway in the long and lonely trail which led to Red River, an event was shaping which would exert a permanent influence on his future life and happiness.

Late on the afternoon of June 19th, 1848, a young clerk at the Hudson's Bay post at Mattawa, where the river of that name empties into the greater flood of the Ottawa, descried a large Indian canoe sweep round the distant bend of the river. Throughout a long life, the watcher retained a vivid recollection of the scene—the grateful warmth of the evening, the sights and sounds of spring, always tardy in these regions, the sun's rays reddening the placid waters, the waving hands and the sound of girlish laughter from the still distant canoe, whose occupants were amongst the first to descend that season from the icy regions of Hudson's Bay.

In another moment the whole staff had been summoned to greet the new arrivals and assist them to disembark. They proved to be Mr. Richard Hardisty, late Chief Trader in the Kinogimmise district, and his family on their way

to Montreal. The family consisted of Mrs. Hardisty (*née* Sutherland), a dark, *petite* creature, still of great beauty, their daughter Isabella, and two sons, Thomas and Henry. Of these, Isabella was a most agreeable, vivacious young lady of nineteen or twenty, who had lately returned from an English boarding-school, where she had passed five happy years. All were accorded a hearty welcome by the factor at Mattawa; the evening was spent pleasantly, and the next day the Hardistys and their Indian guides and servants resumed their long journey down the Ottawa.

On their arrival at Lachine, Mr. Hardisty had an interview with Governor Simpson, the upshot of which was that he found himself transferred to the Esquimaux Bay district of Labrador. The Company's steamer was on the point of starting on her annual voyage down the St. Lawrence and through the Straits of Belle Isle to Rigolet and other Labrador stations. Mr. Hardisty, his wife, Isabella, and another daughter, Maria, who had been at school in Montreal, embarked in the vessel. They met many icebergs, but otherwise the voyage was uneventful. On arrival at Rigolet, they were met by Chief Trader Nourse, who surrendered his charge of Esquimaux Bay into Mr. Hardisty's hands, and after a few days' sojourn, conducted the latter and his family up stream to the more comfortable post of North-West River, which was to be the home of the Hardistys for some four years, and of Isabella for nearly twenty.

It was then that Donald Alexander Smith and Isabella Hardisty first met.

There has been much idle talk concerning the relationship which subsequently grew out of this meeting, but it is all based on a misconception of the marriage laws and customs then prevailing in the Hudson's Bay Company's territories. The ordinance of marriage there, entered into by the mutual consent of the parties, was as solemnly respected as it is in Scotland, where the simple consent of both the contracting parties is as binding as all the solemn

covenants and ritual of the Church. In this manner Miss Hardisty had entered into a union with Mr. Grant. After a brief, unhappy experience, this union was duly annulled; and a few months later, on March 9th, 1853, she married Mr. Smith, who in the meantime had succeeded Chief Trader Hardisty in charge of the district.

In the following year was born the only child of this union, the present Baroness Strathcona and Mount Royal. She was born on January 17th, and was given the names Margaret Charlotte, the former being that borne by her father's favourite sister.

CHAPTER V

LIFE AT ESQUIMAUX BAY (1853-62)

"THE life of a Hudson's Bay factor in Labrador," wrote Dr. W. T. Grenfell, a man who succeeded in making that country his own in a manner comparable only to Donald Smith's association with the peninsula, " does not offer all the joys of civilisation, but it offers a field to develop courage, muscle, resourcefulness and self-reliance to an eminent degree. It makes men who shoot straight, fear nothing, and live hard. It offers the simple life, with its many advantages, and it breeds hospitality, a brotherliness to one's kind, a readiness to stand by anyone in distress, that, in our complex life in cities and even villages, we rarely find ourselves called on to exercise. Never has a visitor travelled our coast but his heart has gone out equally to all the brave men of these two great organisations, the Moravian Missions and the Hudson's Bay Company."

The subject of this memoir led this life for twenty years. If the land thus moulded, toughened and fortified his character, if it exerted an influence upon any of his traits or of his habits, he in turn reacted upon the land. It was once said by an American orator, that if Providence had sent his hero to the North Pole, he would have " found a means of generating heat from polar magnetism, dissolved a canal between the glaciers to carry to the Esquimaux market cabbages grown in the fructifying heat of the aurora borealis." Donald Smith was assuredly something of this type of man.

" So diversified had been his reading in his younger years that," observed an old and valued friend, Dr. Robert Campbell, " few topics could be started in his presence to which he

was not able to make a contribution." Philosophy, history, political economy, medicine[1] and divinity, his stalwart understanding had studied and made its own. Left alone with his books and his thoughts, he had pondered much over the great problems besetting human life. The self-discipline through which he passed during these solitary winters in Labrador made him the strong man, independent alike in his thinking and acting, that he afterwards showed himself. Among other volumes in the 'post's' library were works on zoology and botany, and these he perused with great care, so as to enable him to identify the few animals and plants inhabiting the country which he was wont to traverse."

Although the descriptions and nomenclature of the books he studied differed not a little from those now employed, he knew the things and was able to differentiate them, while confessing that he could not attach to them their technical specific names. He knew all about the polar bear, the walrus, the eider-duck, and the wild goose, as well as about the fur-bearing animals in which, as a trader, he was an interested expert.

"In like manner he recognised the mosses, the lichens and stunted shrubs which were found growing in the crevices of the rocks on their surface. He also acquired a clear insight into the peculiarities of the Esquimaux, of the Montagnais and other Indian tribes with whom business brought him in contact, of whom he was ever ready to become a champion. And as he appreciated their finer native qualities, so they reciprocated his kind sympathy with them by reposing in him implicit confidence. He was to them at once physician and priest, healing their sick, marrying them, and burying their dead. His dealings with the natives helped to make him a keen, shrewd judge of men. His shaggy brows gave to his eyes a telescopic look significant of his penetrating perception and far-sightedness. The fuller in-

[1] Amongst his Labrador medical works still existing are Watson's *Principles and Practice of Physic;* Copland's *Dictionary of Practical Medicine;* and W. Buchan's *Domestic Medicine.*

tercourse he had with mankind developed his instinctive politeness which rested on consideration for others. He became affable to a degree, and no one had a finer courtesy. All these qualities he early showed, and the influence of the culture he acquired in his many-sided reading in the wilds of Labrador continued perceptible throughout his long life.

"Two useful habits he formed at that time which were of service to him ever afterwards. One was that of composition. He became master of a terse, incisive style of writing. Twice a year, when the semi-annual mail arrived and departed, he sent long letters to his mother in Scotland, detailing his experiences and giving an account of how he passed his time.

"The other valuable habit which he early formed was the saving one. There were, of course, few temptations for the spending of money at Hamilton Inlet, in any case; but he made it one of his maxims to lay by one-half of his earnings, even when, in the period of his apprenticeship, his salary was only two shillings a day."[1]

Abstemious and parsimonious as regards himself, he was ever seeking to raise the standard of comfort and material prosperity of those about him and of those interests confided to his charge. One of his first acts as Chief Trader was to take steps to provide the Company's servants in the district with a source of wholesome vegetable food. To accomplish this involved the establishment of a farm and a somewhat more scientific knowledge of agriculture than anyone in the Bay coast possessed. His keen eye had already marked the natural advantages of the land about North-West River. He proceeded, therefore, to lay out a farm which, for a while, excited the derision of the trappers, fishermen and "planters" of the entire coast, until this feeling became changed for one of astonishment and admiration. Two worn, calf-bound volumes which lie before me—MacIntosh's *Book of the Garden*, and Lindley's *Theory and Practice of Horti-*

[1] Dr. Robert Campbell.

culture, the fly leaves of each of which is inscribed, "Don. A. Smith, North-West River, Esquimaux Bay, 1855"—reveal something of his preoccupations at this time. He sent to the Orkneys for seeds, for poultry and for hardy cattle, and to Canada for horses and sheep. Meanwhile, he had dug and fertilised the land according to the most enlightened methods. He early put to the test his belief in the value of fish offal as a soil fertiliser. To what perfection in a very few years Mr. Smith's farm attained I offer one piece of testimony as striking as it is unexpected.

It is an account of a visit paid to Labrador in 1860 by a party of Americans of scientific tastes and pursuits, primarily to observe the solar eclipse of the year. The writer of the article, Mr. Charles Hallock, afterwards Dean of the Smithsonian Institute at Washington, describes how he and some of his more adventurous companions penetrated up the bay and landed on the beach at North-West River, to be confronted by the trim and tidy buildings of the Company's post. The writer proceeds:

"Then the astonished ear is greeted with the lowing of cattle and the bleating of sheep on shore; and in the rear of the agent's house are veritable barns, from whose open windows hangs fragrant new-mown hay; and a noisy cackle within is ominous of fresh-laid eggs! Surely Nature has been remarkably lavish here, or some presiding genius, of no ordinary enterprise and taste, has redeemed the place from its wilderness desolation. Both are true. The climate is much warmer here than upon the coast, and there is a fair admixture of soil. Donald Alexander Smith, the intelligent agent of the post, is a practical farmer, and, by continued care and the employment of proper fertilising agents, succeeds in forcing to maturity, within the short summer season, most of the vegetables and grains produced in warmer latitudes.

"He has seven acres under cultivation, of which a considerable portion is under glass. There are growing turnips, peas, cucumbers, potatoes, pumpkins, melons, cauliflowers

barley, oats, etc. Corn will not ripen, nor even form upon the ear. Before Smith's house is a flower garden. Here, too, is a carriage road, two miles long (strange sight in this roadless country!), upon which the agent betimes indulges in the luxury of a drive, for he has two horses which he employs upon the farm. A bull, twelve cows, half a dozen sheep, goats, fowls and dogs comprise his live-stock. There is no other place like Smith's in Labrador, in all its area of 420,000 square miles!"[1]

Considering the difficulties which had to be surmounted, "Smith's Farm" was an achievement in itself worthy of the man. It was his first great achievement, and in Labrador it made him famous.

I have heard him tell the story of the building of his first strip of roadway—the difficulties encountered, the carrying and breaking of the stone, the disheartening subsidences, the "washouts," the alternate bribes and threatenings of the labourers in order to finish a section before the frost set in, and his pride when the first wheeled cart —the first in all Labrador—rolled swiftly over its surface.

This was the same man who, a generation later, drove the last spike of a road which connected the Atlantic Ocean with the Pacific, and with the same sort of pride watched the first locomotive pass over that steel highway!

But, in truth, the farm, and what his friend Mr. Connolly, at Rigolet, called "estate improvements," occupied only a secondary place in Donald Smith's thoughts and scheme of life.

Not long after he became a Chief Trader a marked change came over the character of the Company's operations in Esquimaux Bay. More and more attention came to be paid to fish, chiefly salmon, to sealskins and seal-oil. Long before there was a cod-fishery in Labrador salmon was fished for and exported to England. That old pioneer Cartwright wrote in 1779: "In Eagle River we are killing 750 salmon

[1] *Harper's Magazine*, December, 1861.

a day, or 35 tierces, and would have killed more had we more nets." Between June 23rd to July 20th he killed in the same stream 12,396 fish, or 300 tierces. The flavour of the Labrador salmon was, and is, highly esteemed; and, when packed and salted in barrels, the fish fetched a good price in the London market. From an early period the Hudson's Bay Company saw the advantages of netting the Labrador rivers, and of so employing the fur trappers who otherwise would have been idle during the summer season.

In 1854 a Treaty was negotiated with America by which, in return for allowing the fishermen of that nation a share in the fisheries, the duties were taken off the product in the American markets. The trade in fresh salmon was then beginning to be profitable here, as at the St. Lawrence stations, and salmon, packed in ice, came to be carried to London, to Boston and other ports, even to New York and to the far west.

A decade later Dr. Hind wrote: "The expectation is far from being visionary that the salmon of the rivers tributary to the Gulf, securely packed in ice, will find their way as far south as New Orleans. When the intercolonial railway is completed the task will be comparatively easy, the vessels from the north shore may land their cargoes at Gaspè, where ice to any extent can be laid up in store. The ice vessels trading to New Orleans, from Boston and other northern ports, will afford an excellent means, when peace is established, for conveying the salmon of the cold Gulf of St. Lawrence to the almost tropical shores of the Gulf of Mexico; or they may find a more expeditious passage by the railroads in the valley of the St. Lawrence and the steamers of the Mississippi."

Addressing the Canadian House of Commons many years later, Mr. Smith said:

The people on the coast of Labrador were an honest and industrious but very poor people, living from hand to mouth. At first they looked upon that Treaty with dread, fearing the competition of

the Americans. The fact was that when the Americans came, the Canadians worked themselves still more, and in a few years instead of being so very poor, with very few of the necessaries of life, and none of the luxuries, they became a well-to-do people. The number of their fish yearly increased, and they found that, man to man, they were as good as those they had so dreaded. They became more manly, and felt they were quite able to compete with the Americans.

The new order of things meant double labour to the Company's Chief Agent and his staff. Of this Sir George Simpson and the home authorities seem to have been complacently unaware. "We are all sadly overworked here," wrote Mr. Smith from Rigolet in 1856. "Our business is increasing each season, yet we have the same number of labourers and we are not expected to increase our expenses."

Great was the competition to get first to market with the fish, whether in England, St. John's or Boston. The first cargo always commanded a higher price, and Mr. Smith never spared himself at such times. Even to this day legends are current of his feats of continuous labour—how he personally superintended the packing of the fish during the day and spent consecutive nights in checking tallies and in examining and revising invoices. At times, when the Company's steamer arrived, he would frequently remain in his clothes for forty-eight hours on end.

The efforts of the Company's servants were not at first wholly agreeable to the old-established firms or their agents, and a great deal of correspondence, slightly acrimonious on one side and with unvarying courtesy on the other, is extant. Several firms, such as Messrs. Hunt and Henley, complained of the interference of the Company's men with parties of fishermen on the Labrador coast; and a few years later (1859) the Company complained of unwarrantable proceedings adopted by the rival traders. In that year, not long before Governor Simpson's death, it was decided that the Esquimaux Bay district should be separated from the Montreal department, much to Chief Trader Smith's satisfaction,

for it gave him what he had long been striving for—a freer hand within his own territory.

It soon came to be recognised that, as the price of fresh Labrador salmon in the London market was too low, it would be more profitable to sell the fish to local merchants or find a market for it in Montreal. Mr. Smith then called the Company's attention to the large profits which might accrue from a new enterprise—the packing of fresh salmon in tins. This was soon inaugurated, and it lasted at Eagle River until the competition of the British Columbia salmon packing came to render it unprofitable.

There were other matters requiring great tact and prudence in the management. Such, for example, was the demand of the North-West River Indians for the ministrations of a Roman Catholic missionary. Sir George Simpson, whose policy had always been to favour these missionaries, addressed a letter to the Roman Catholic Archbishop of Quebec on the subject, which drew forth a remonstrance from the Anglican Bishop Field of Newfoundland, and could hardly have been agreeable to the Moravian missionaries of Labrador. The effect the proposed Roman chapel would have on the Company's relations with two such influential bodies was a question requiring careful consideration, for it must be borne in mind that the Moravians were traders as well as priests, and a bitter competition was to be avoided.

A century and a half ago the Esquimaux of the coast of Labrador were all heathen. They worshipped Torngak, an old man, as they supposed, who ruled the sea and its inhabitants, and Supperuksoak, the goddess of the land. The *angekoks,* or sorcerers, held the people completely in superstitious bondage. Permission was readily granted by the British Government to the Moravian Brethren in 1769 to found a mission among these heathen.[1] In the year 1770

[1] Previous to this date several exploratory journeys had been made to this coast. A missionary named Ehrhardt was murdered, together with five sailors, by the savages in a bay to the south of Hopedale, in 1752.

Jens Haven came to Labrador, and took possession of the land which had been granted by the Crown, for the purposes of the mission, to the Society for the Furtherance of the Gospel. In the year following, Nain was begun, and Hopedale in 1782. Hebron dates only from 1830.

In 1856 Mr. Smith decided upon the policy of keeping on very friendly terms with the Moravian missionaries, and wrote to the Brother Superior, suggesting that facilities should be given them to establish a mission on the shores of Esquimaux Bay. In the annual report for the following year, it is stated: "In pursuance of the invitation given by Mr. Donald Smith, Brother Elsner left Hopedale in April, 1857, and journeyed to North-West River to discuss with him the advisability of starting a mission either there or at Rigolet. After a hard journey of five days he reached Mr. Smith's comfortable and hospitable dwelling. He was delighted with the country and the appearance of the settlement. Mr. Smith had four head of cattle, besides sheep, goats, and fowls; there was milk in plenty, and for the first time in Labrador he tasted fresh roast beef, mutton, and pork."

Mr. Smith's proposal was an enticing one. Although not fully authorised by the Hudson's Bay Company, he suggested that they should build a church and dwelling-house, and pay a missionary £100 a year. Now £100 a year meant wealth to a Moravian, whose yearly stipend normally was £22.

The constant prevalence of disease, due to ill-diet, indulgence in liquor, and exposure, as well as the occurrence of accidents, too frequently the result of carelessness, made it necessary for a factor to know the rudiments of medicine and surgery. In fact, he had to be physician, parson and judge among his people, as well as fur and fish buyer and shopkeeper.

Some forty years later, addressing a body of London medical students, Mr. Smith related to them some of his

own discoveries in the treatment of surgical cases in Labrador.[1]

It may interest you to know that what may be termed a primitive and somewhat rude form of antiseptic treatment was practised in Canada some years before Lord Lister introduced his great discovery. For the treatment of wounds, ulcerated sores, etc., a pulp was made by boiling the inner bark of the juniper tree. The liquor which resulted was used for washing and treating the wounds, and the bark, beaten into a plastic pliable mass, was applied after the thorough cleansing of the wound, forming a soft cushion lending itself to every inequality of the sore. Scrupulous cleanliness was observed, and fresh material used for every application. It will, I think, be admitted that this is essentially the basis of the antiseptic treatment which is now so important, and with which the name of Lord Lister will be ever honourably associated.

Perhaps I may be permitted to relate to you another little interesting experience which came to my notice. On the Labrador coast thirty or forty years ago there was a serious outbreak of scarlet fever, accompanied by diphtheria. Many of the people died, both children and adults, and the survivors were so alarmed by the spread of the disease and its fatal results, and were in such an abject state of fear that they kept away from the houses in which people were known to be suffering. There is little doubt in my mind that many of the persons died from simple dread of the disease and the fright occasioned by the mortality.

An officer of the Hudson's Bay Company, visiting the settlement, found this state of things existing. It was reported to him that a family of a former employee of the company—a Scotsman—had taken the disease at a place some twelve miles distant. The official went there and found the whole family confined in a small hut. The different members of the family were scattered over the floor and, in fact, in any place where room could be found. The door was shut and so were the windows, and the odour that came when the door was opened can best be left to the imagination. One of the family, a boy, had died and was lying in an outhouse.

The first thing he did was to break the window and let in the air, and then to administer some remedies. All the other members of the family recovered, and the utter helplessness and abject terror which had previously prevailed among the inhabitants were at once changed into a feeling of hope. They saw that death was not inevitable, and happily, although the disease still lingered on for some

[1] Address at Middlesex Hospital, October 7th, 1897.

time, not a fatal case was subsequently recorded. I merely mention this to show the moral effect the return of confidence which resulted from the death record having been temporarily stopped by the exercise of a little common sense.

Another curious incident comes to my recollection. A resident in the country returned to England in consequence of a severe illness. He consulted the best medical men, and his case was diagnosed as one of Bright's disease. He was told that he could not last more than a few months, and made up his mind to return to Labrador and end his days; but the unexpected happened, and he lived for many years afterwards. Some of the natives, knowing of his complaint, or, at any rate, of the symptoms, advised him to prepare a decoction from the juniper shrub and to drink nothing else for several months. In despair he did what was suggested, and after some time appeared to be perfectly cured. It is not claimed, of course, that the recovery was due solely to the efficacy of the remedy.

One of the constant problems which confronted Mr. Smith, both as Chief Trader and Chief Factor in Labrador, was how to utilise the neglected resources of the country and take full advantage of its valuable products. In his letters he frequently called attention to the neglect of Labrador's minerals, and suggested that a competent mineralogist should be sent out to examine into their commercial character. "The beautiful quartz called Labradorite is abundant, and ought easily to find a market amongst jewellers in Europe," he declared. He also made reference to the wild sarsaparilla, "of which," according to Mr. Isbister, "England imports from Russia and Honduras 180,000 pounds annually," and frequently alluded to the commercial possibilities of the Labrador tea-plant, which, under the name of *Weesuckapucka,* had formerly been imported by the Company until the East India Company protested that it was an infringement of their monopoly. Then, again, why were not Labrador cranberries in demand, he asked, when tens of thousands of gallons were imported from the Czar's dominions? Further, the waste of fish and fish offal on the coast greatly concerned him, and as early as 1855 he was discussing plans for the manufacture of fish

manure, as a valuable substitute for guano in the British and American markets.

In a report on this subject, he pointed out that the total annual product of the North American cod fisheries was then estimated to be one and a half million tons of fresh fish. Not less than one-half of this was refuse, thrown back into the sea or left on the shore to decay, although it was capable of yielding 150,000 tons of a valuable manure, almost half that annually produced by Peru.

He continued :

> Very few economists understand the value of the fisheries. They are always thinking in terms of wheat or cattle. The waste of fish on this coast is enormous, and is only comparable to the waste of buffalo in the Far West. Every ton of fish is equal to at least three head of cattle or fifteen sheep, and Labrador yields millions of quintals (hundredweights) annually. This fishery alone could feed the whole of the Irish population.

Mr. Smith was on cordial terms with all the chief traders and " planters " on the coast. One of the chief of these was Mr. Nathan Norman, who was for many years in charge of the large fishing establishment at Indian Harbour. With him Mr. Smith carried on a considerable correspondence.

Another frequent correspondent was the late Robert H. Prowse, for many years the agent at St. John's, Newfoundland.

In his early days Mr. Smith often visited old residents on the coast. Some of these were Englishmen who had drifted hither by some extraordinary caprice of fortune, men like John Williams, a Londoner by birth, who had found a charm in the wilderness for forty-one years. Nearly all the settlers, however, were Englishmen or Newfoundlanders who originally visited the coast as fishermen or as servants of the fur and trading companies.

Williams had married a plump Esquimaux damsel. A visitor to his cottage some years later, described how this Esquimaux matron greeted him with an *Oskshi-ni* (good-

morning), and then resumed her vigils over a decoction of spruce which was being metamorphosed into beer. Candles of reindeer tallow and lamps of spluttering seal-oil emitted a feeble light, barely visible through the smoke of their burning, yet revealing sealskins pendent from the rafters, *komatiks* stowed overhead, and snowshoes, guns, and fishing gear hanging from pegs driven into the walls.

"She, the help-meet, is so in the strictest sense of the word. She cures the codfish for market and for family consumption, manufactures sealskin boots and garments, tends the salmon nets, 'sculps' the seals and prepares the oil for burning, feeds the dogs, etc., etc., besides performing her domestic and maternal duties. When driven by household cares, little vexations often occur to ruffle her temper, and then her shrill voice screams constantly as she works: '*Webuck-tam dog-ouk, ouk*—clear out, I tell you! Susan! Wat be doon? Where's the dish-cloth? No, that beant he, blockhead. Mercy, who ever saw the flies and nippers so bad as they! You, there, shet that door—shet it. Hist! abide still, child—knock off, I tell ye, or I'll fix that bawling. *Peruik!* now, who's had finger in that pot? Oh my!'"

Another of the residents on the Labrador coast with whom Mr. Smith was on intimate terms, was Henry Lodge. He was one of the several intelligent and really educated men living upon that coast, men who had been impelled thither either from pure love of adventure, or from misadventure in love. Regarding his family in England it was said in 1860 that "one brother is now a manufacturer at Bristol, another is a colonel in Her Majesty's service at the Cape of Good Hope, and a brother-in-law was librarian to the Prince of Wales." Reverses came, and he strode forth from the uncongenial atmosphere of civilisation, and turned his face to Labrador, and for forty-two years he devoted himself to cod and seal fishing, not once visiting

his native land. In May, 1860, he died, at the age of seventy-seven years.

All settlers in Labrador, as distinguished from the visiting fishermen, are styled "planters." With this folk the short summer is a busy season, the cod, salmon, and seal fisheries demanding their constant attention. At its close they make up their accounts with the traders, and upon the approach of winter retire to the interior, where the timber affords them fuel and a shelter. Generally, their nets and gear are rented for the season, but, as a rule, the amount of fish caught does not pay for the advances of provisions and clothing. Thus they get deeper in debt year by year.

At the close of the fishery they return to their houses on the inlet, stopping on the way at the Hudson's Bay posts, where they receive other advances of provisions and clothing to be charged against their coming winter's fur hunt. Arriving home, they dig their potatoes, and catch and freeze trout, which swarm in the mouths of all the streams at this season. As soon as sufficient snow falls, they set their traps for marten, fox, otter, lynx, and other fur-bearing animals. Each hunter has a "path," or line of traps, fifty miles or more in length. A single winter visit to all the traps on the line may involve a week's journey. Small "shacks," or shelters, where the hunters may pass the night, are built at convenient distances along the path.

If the men were engaged in the salmon fishery alone, half the fish they caught were turned in to the Company as rent for the nets and the use of the "posts," which were, and still are, situated at the most favourable points. The Company had a number of boarded huts for the fishermen in their employ, of such narrow dimensions (*res angustae domi*) as to afford sleeping accommodation only for persons of normal length. On one occasion a very honest and active man presented himself to Chief Factor Smith for a bunk in one of these huts. The difficulty was that he

was six feet six inches in length, nearly a foot longer than the bunk. On an inspection of his quarters, he rejected Mr. Smith's offer summarily, declaring that he was not going to be cramped for any agent or planter living, and neither was he content to be sawn in two.

"Will a bed seven feet long suit you?" asked Mr. Smith.

The fisherman said it would. Thereupon, Mr. Smith sent for the Company's carpenter, a hole was cut in the wall of the building, to which a box lined with deerskin was applied outside and rendered stable by props. The man afterwards told Mr. Smith it was the first thoroughly comfortable and sensible bunk he had occupied for years.

The receptacle was afterwards exhibited at the store at Rigolet, and enjoyed much local fame as "Bill Sadler's leg box."

Naturally, salmon was the staple food along the inlet during the salmon-fishing season, but even this most delicate fish was apt to pall ere long, and grateful enough were the planters for a change—even though it were cod or herring, fresh or salt, not to mention trout and smaller fish. It was interesting to note that the Company's regular labourers, who were fed on fish for most of the year, were really in better condition than the meat-fed *voyageurs* of the interior.

One of the most notable characters at Rigolet and North-West River was old Joe Goudy, who had been in the Company's service since 1818, and had served in at least a dozen factories between Labrador and Red River Settlement. He was fond of relating his adventures in the journey he had made from Red River to North-West River on snowshoes—a journey of 2,500 miles, during which he had camped in the open air, with no other covering but the black vault of heaven.

Old Goudy became very much attached to Mr. Smith, who learned from him many facts and stories, which always

remained in his mind, concerning the far western country. Amongst other old servants at North-West River was an Orkneyman, Henry Hay, who had accompanied John MacLean in his overland journey from Ungava ten years before, and Sam Irvine.

Another of Mr. Smith's friends was the Nascopie Chief, Otelne, who for many years had come down with his companions to trade at North-West River. One season he failed to come, and it was learned that he had taken it into his head to journey southward to the post at Seven Islands, where Chief Factor James Anderson, whose acquaintance Mr. Smith had made in 1839 in Montreal, had recently been appointed. The climate of the Gulf, however, did not agree with Otelne and his people. Many fell sick and died. Next year, therefore, all were encamped as usual near North-West River.

Still another friend of the Chief Trader and his family is referred to in the following characteristic letter which I am privileged to give, addressed by Mrs. Donald Smith to her mother, then at Lachine. It also affords a little glimpse of her life at the "fort."

North-West River, Labrador.

June 28, 1856.

My dearest Mamma,—We are having the most delightful weather imaginable—apart from flies and mosquitoes. Mr. Smith, who has gone down to Indian Harbour, myself, and the children are all well.

About a fortnight ago little Maggie, who had been behaving herself up till then, gave us a great fright by breaking out all over in a rash—but it went away, I am thankful to say, in a couple of days, and she is now as well as possible. I spend a great deal of my time in the garden, where we have sown all the English seeds as well as all Maria's Orkney ones. We hope with care to have a fine show of flowers this year.

This post has been unusually busy this spring, and also everyone in the Bay. I think of you often, dearest Mamma, and wonder if you like the change. I sincerely trust you do. I hope Papa is still in good health, and not suffering too much from his poor knee. Give him my fond love.

Maria tells me she has written and sent you all the patterns you asked for.

Your old friend Samluk came down the other day and nearly cried when he heard you had gone. "Miss Harsty no come back? Miss Harsty no come back?" I am told he will carry to the coast Yankees next season—that is, if he does not die of a broken heart.

All here send kindest remembrances, and the children kisses.—Ever your loving daughter,

BELLA.

From North-West River during the years that he spent there, Mr. Smith dispatched many letters, not only to his parents and his family, but to his fellow-officers in the service, such as Messrs. Swanston, Barnston, Clouston, Anderson, Hamilton, Mactavish, Cuthbert Cumming, and his brothers-in-law, the Hardistys.

No fewer than six of the latter were in the service, viz. William Lawson, Richard, Thomas, Henry, George, and Joseph. Two of them, at least, were men of exceptional ability; and Richard reached the rank of Inspecting Chief Factor, dying, in ~~1902~~ 1859, a Senator of the Dominion.

OCT 15 1859 IN WINNIPEG

Besides his letters to the above-named, there were numerous occasional correspondents scattered over the country. It is unfortunate that so few of these have been preserved, for, read in the light of after events, they would possess signal interest, as may be judged by the following, which was addressed to William Kernaghan, a gentleman who had spent some weeks in Labrador and been Mr. Smith's guest at North-West River a few years previously.

NORTH-WEST RIVER POST, LABRADOR.
January 18, 1857.

MY DEAR Mr. KERNAGHAN,—I am very much obliged to you for your letter of the 3rd of April last, and was very glad indeed to hear from you again, and to learn that all was prospering with you. I have thought a great deal about your flattering proposal, and you may depend upon it that if my prospects (or you would say lack of prospects) here induce me to retire from the service of the Honourable Company, I will not fail to write and let you know. It is possible

that circumstances connected with the Company itself may make early consideration of such a step on my part necessary.

I doubt very much now whether I shall ever be transferred to the West, but much depends upon what happens in this department in the course of the next few outfits.

Your account of the city of Chicago and the opportunities it offers interests me extremely, and I have no doubt that one might make rapid headway there in commercial enterprises, such as shipping, which makes me regret all the more that this magical land of yours is not within the borders of the Queen's dominions.

I myself am becoming convinced that before many decades are passed the world will see a great change in the country north of Lake Superior and in the Red River country when the Company's licence expires or its charter is modified. Thousands of settlers are pressing forward into the Michigan territory, where land, I gather, is not vastly better than that on the British side of the boundary. You will understand that I, as a Labrador man, cannot be expected to sympathise altogether with the prejudices against immigrants and railways entertained by many of the western commissioned officers. At all events, it is probably that settlement of the country from Fort William westward to the Red River, even a considerable distance beyond, will eventually take place and with damaging effect on the fur trade generally. Governor Simpson himself took a very favourable view of the character of the country for settlement.

I shall prudently keep my opinion until it is asked for. . . . Even in Labrador, " bleak " and " desolate " as it is, or reputed to be, my little farm here continues to flourish, and I have managed with care to grow some things which would surprise you ; and this year I intend to make some new trials under glass.

Whenever you can spare the time I shall be glad to hear from you, and if you can interest any of your geological friends to explore this district you may depend upon me to give them a cordial welcome. Unless I resign from the service or am transferred it will be some years before a furlough will enable me to enjoy the privilege of Western travel, but when that time comes we shall meet if we both survive, and I will claim your kind counsel as to where I can deposit my little talent to most advantage.

With kind regards, in which my wife unites, believe me to be, my dear Mr. Kernaghan, most truly yours, DON. A. SMITH.

Mr. Smith derived his idea of Sir George Simpson's opinions from the work which the late Governor published under his own name in 1843. There, in reference to the

Rainy River country, occurs the following significant passage:

> Nor are the banks less favourable for agriculture than the waters themselves to navigation, resembling in some measure those of the Thames near Richmond. . . . Is it too much for the eye of philanthropy to discern, through the vista of this noble stream, connecting as it does the fertile shores of two spacious lakes, with crowded steamboats on its bosom and populous towns on its borders?

Less than fifteen years later Simpson disavowed this language before a Parliamentary Committee appointed in 1857 to consider the affairs of the Hudson's Bay Company. The proceedings of this body naturally excited the liveliest interest throughout the Company's service; and by none of the commissioned officers was the testimony of the various witnesses, including that of Governor Simpson, read with greater attention and, perhaps, astonishment than by the Company's chief representative in Labrador.

Writing on November 4th, 1857, Chief Trader Hamilton observed to Mr. Smith:

> The report of the Committee which has been sitting on our affairs in London since February is out. A copy will reach you in due course from Leadenhall Street (if they think we can be safely trusted with one); but meantime I hasten to forward you the gist of their finding and recommendations. Briefly, then, they are of opinion that "whatever may be the validity or otherwise of the rights claimed by the Hudson's Bay Company, under the Charter, it is desirable that they should continue to enjoy the privilege of exclusive trade, which they now possess, except so far as those privileges are limited by our recommendations.
>
> These recommendations, briefly, are that the Red River and Saskatchewan districts come, as soon as may be, under the control and jurisdiction of Canada. If Canada does not immediately wish to annex, temporary administration should be undertaken.
>
> In arriving at this decision, three considerations are mentioned.
>
> 1. The great importance to the more peopled portions of British North America that law and order should be maintained.
>
> 2. The fatal effects which they believe would infallibly result to the Indian population from a system of open competition in the

fur trade and the consequent introduction of spirits in a far greater degree than at present.

3. The probability of the indiscriminate destruction of the more valuable fur bearing animals in the course of a few years.

The Committee shirk altogether the question of chartered rights. How far these rights may prove an obstacle to the attainment of the objects aimed at they refuse to say, and speak of amicable adjustment by the British and Canadian Governments and the Company. They "indulge the confident hope that the Government will be enabled next session to present a Bill which shall lay the foundation of an equitable and satisfactory arrangement in the probable event of legislation being found necessary."

How the Governor and Honourable Committee take all this I have not yet learnt, but I dare say they regard it as temporary victory.

Another correspondent, Chief Trader McMurray, wrote:

It has certainly been a most spirited—not to say violent—attack on the Company, and yet it has been conducted with so much decorum that the temper of none of the witnesses was very considerably ruffled. I do not apprehend, however, that we have seen the last of it, at least so far as the Red River malcontents are concerned.

Canada would appear to be in deadly earnest with regard to the railroad, and my own opinion is that Sir George Simpson will not set any very formidable obstacles in the path of the promoters of the scheme. Personally, I do not believe it to be as fantastic as many in the service hold.

You will be interested to know that Sir George was put upon the rack for days at a time, and on the whole came out with flying colours. It was extremely awkward that Mr. Roebuck and the others should confront him with passages from his own book concerning the fertility of the country and the practicability of a northwesterly route, which he was obliged with changed opinions to disavow. McLaughlin writes that this caused a good deal of amusement in Committee, but Sir George stuck to his guns. He was particularly interested in all that passed with regard to cultivation. They even brought up a statement of old Sir Alexander Mackenzie's that he saw in the Elk River a kitchen garden as fine as any in the world.

I thought Sir George was a little hard on his cousin, Thomas Simpson. He kept telling the Committee that he did not conceive that his judgment was sound on many points, that his judgment was "placed higher than it should be," etc.

You remember Kernaghan. He also appeared before the Committee, but luckily he did not volunteer any evidence concerning

his residence in this part of the world. After detailing a great deal of inaccurate information about Vancouver Island, etc., he was asked if there was any other part of the North American territory that he was personally acquainted with. He said he had been in Labrador. "How long were you in Labrador?" If McLaughlin expected to have any further edition to his set of scandals he must have been disappointed, for Kernaghan's reply was, "Not very long." Ellice leaned forward as if for the intention of ascertaining the precise period of Kernaghan's sojourn, but evidently thought better of it, and Kernaghan was spared.

But, after all, the *fons et origo* of this present agitation was Isbister, and his examination was a most lengthy one. He was asked about his property in the Red River settlement, which consists of a farm at present worked by his uncle, P. Kennedy. He told the Committee that he had raised corn as far north as Fort Norman, on Mackenzie River, near the Arctic Circle. He had also raised barley and potatoes there. That was the most northerly situation that the cultivation of wheat had ever been attempted. Barley was tried at Fort Good Hope, but failed. Potatoes were also more or less of a failure there, and he put the limit of the growth of potatoes at Fort Norman. . . .

You have heard of McLaughlin's ridiculous proclamation to the Indians. It provoked shrieks of laughter in Committee, especially when McLaughlin confessed that it was in rather bad French. I send it to you in order that you may be entertained. Napoleon's production pales into insignificance beside this.

Did you see what Chief Justice Draper told the Committee?—that they might laugh at him as visionary, but he hoped to see the time, or believed his children would live to see it, when there would be a railway going all across the country and ending at the Pacific. He said he entertained no doubts whatever of it. I am told that this fantasy occasioned much merriment, especially on the part of the "Old Bear," but I am equally convinced that it will come.

Writing from North-West River, Mr. Smith replied:

I am greatly obliged to you for sending me McLaughlin's magniloquent proclamation, which was probably written less for the "Métis" than for the people of what he called "Grande Bretange." McLaughlin's uncle did his best to get him into the service, but Sir George would have nothing to do with him after their first interview. He went out to Red River, had a quarrel with Governor Christie, and did his best to stir up all the opposition he could, trading clandestinely with the Americans, Indians, and half-breeds.

Death of Governor Simpson

There is a significant passage in a letter written two or three years later by Chief Trader Smith to Chief Trader Dugald Mactavish.

> Although destiny has sent me to the east . . . I have never made a secret of the fact that my heart—or a large part of it—was in the west. . . . As I pen this a map of Rupert's Land hangs on the wall before me. So I beg you to hesitate before putting me beyond the pale, as a mere Labrador man. Whatever the Committee in London does or does not do, I for one see that matters at Red River are slowly but surely coming to a head, and have been long before Sir George departed. The Company can only maintain its hold and its monopoly there by altering its whole policy, for the malcontents are increasing constantly in force, and are not to be repressed by having the Royal Charter constantly quoted to them. If Governor Johnson had three or four regiments of soldiers to do the Company's bidding, I have little doubt Kennedy and the rest would be overawed and compelled to betake themselves elsewhere. As it is, they will go on until there is a repetition of the old scenes of bloodshed and turbulence, until either Canada or the Imperial Government will be forced to interfere and abrogate the charter.

Before the close of navigation in 1860, Mr. Smith heard of the death of Sir George Simpson in the previous September. "The little Emperor's light has gone out, just after he basked in a final blaze of glory," wrote Mr. Dugald Mactavish, and enclosed newspaper cuttings describing the Governor's reception at Lachine of H.R.H. the Prince of Wales, during the latter's visit to Montreal. "The Governor has entertained many noblemen in his time," wrote another; "the advent of a live Heir Apparent was too great a shock at his time of life."

Simpson was given a funeral of some pomp. Amongst those who paid a final tribute to his memory was Chief Trader Richard Hardisty, Mr. Smith's father-in-law, who was then living at Lachine. He was too infirm, however, to take part in the cortège.[1]

Simpson had for forty years filled a unique position in the fur trade. The measure of his success may partially

[1] Mr. Hardisty died in 1864 at Lachine.

be gauged by the failure of his successors. The personal loyalty which was felt for him by an entire generation of officers blinded them to his defects of character, as it blinded them to the principle upon which his power and his policy were founded and operated. He was the accredited instrument of an English mercantile body; and that body was bent on retarding the development of a great country in order to keep it a fur-hunting preserve; its authority was derived not from an obsolete charter, but from the exertions of a race of bold and adventurous Scotsmen who had themselves discovered, explored, and established posts in that country, and who, but for Simpson, would have had as sovereign a right to their foothold as any other race of discoverers and pioneers. But this question of the "wintering partners" only became acute after Simpson's death.

After all, as Captain W. F. Butler wrote to a Chief Factor of the Company, "a corporation has no conscience. From a tyrant or a despot you may hope to win justice, from a robber you may perchance receive kindness, but a corporation of London merchants represents, to my mind, more mercenary mendacity, and more cowardly contempt of truth and fair play than can be found in the human race."

The language is strong: but who, studying the later history of the Hudson's Bay Company, dare deny its truth?

Of Simpson's great qualities I have already spoken. A trifling instance of his pettiness which remains to be mentioned, is revealed in the following letter, addressed to Donald A. Smith, as Chief Trader at Esquimaux Bay.

TORONTO,
March 21, 1861.

DEAR SIR,—As I have long been most desirous of visiting Labrador for the purpose of making a series of drawings, depicting Indian and Esquimaux life in that peninsula, I venture to address you at the instance of our friend, Mr. R. Hamilton, to ascertain if you would accord me facilities for the accomplishment of my design.

I should mention that I made formal application on two occasions to the late Sir George Simpson, but as I had the misfortune

to incur the Governor's displeasure, I understand that he had given orders that I was not to be countenanced by any of the officers in the service.

You are probably informed of the occasion for this, but in any case the ban has now been removed, and I am most anxious to proceed with my original plan.

I am, sir, your most obedient servant, PAUL KANE.

In a further letter, Kane said :

I think it due to myself to state that the prime cause of my offending was that I had not furnished him (Simpson) copies of my Indian painting *gratis* in recognition of his official protection ; and secondly, that I had omitted to dedicate my recent book, describing my wanderings, to himself. I entertained great respect for Sir George Simpson, but I felt that he was in no sense my patron, and that such favour as I had received from Mr. Christie and others was in no way due to his example.

Paul Kane was one of the earliest of Canadian artists. He was a man of talent, but his renown is due more to his choice of subject than to his technical skill. His series of paintings, illustrative of Indian character and life, are the property of the Ontario Government, and are of great historical and ethnological value. And not the least interesting passage in his book is his naïve description of the petty obstacles placed in his path by, and the little humiliations he had to endure from, the all-powerful Governor, Sir George Simpson.

A great event at North-West River in 1860 was the arrival there of H.M.S. *Bulldog,* in command of Captain Sir Leopold McClintock, R.N. When, in June of that year, McClintock commissioned the *Bulldog* to carry out a survey for the promoters of the North Atlantic Telegraph Route, there was no telegraph between Europe and America. The cable laid in 1858 had broken down completely after twenty days' use, and no attempt had been made to lay a second. To reduce the continuous length of the cable, it was now proposed to lay it in four sections : Scotland to Faroe Islands, Faroe Islands to Iceland, Iceland to Greenland,

and Greenland to Labrador. By this means a higher speed of signalling than was possible over a continuous cable of great length, could be secured. The Admiralty undertook to obtain the deep-sea soundings along the proposed route, but declined to undertake the survey of the coasts of the route or the responsibility of selecting the landing-places for the cable, as it was felt that here the real and probably insuperable difficulties of the scheme would be met. This part of the work was left to the promoters of the scheme, who promptly engaged the hero of the Franklin Relief Expedition, then recently knighted and out of active employment, to undertake it.

" Chief Factor Donald A. Smith, as I saw him on the 26th August, 1860," wrote Sir Leopold McClintock, " was about forty years old, some five feet ten inches high, with long sandy hair, a bushy red beard, and very thick, red eyebrows. He was dressed in a black, swallow-tail coat, not at all according to the fashion of the country, and wore a white linen shirt. Although the Factor's countenance could hardly be called handsome, it was distinguished, and his manners were irreproachable. His talk showed him to be a man of superior intelligence. He bade us enter the parlour, and, after chatting a few moments on the weather and our trip up the river, he introduced us to his wife and two children. Mrs. Smith is a small, intelligent, rather attractive lady, who evinced the greatest curiosity concerning people and events in England and the States, the war, the fashions, and our own personal histories.

" We noted that the room was very well, even tastefully furnished. There were several pictures on the wall, prominent amongst them a large engraving of the coronation of Queen Victoria.

" ' I just missed that event,' observed Mr. Smith, ' for I was obliged to sail for Canada a few weeks before.'

" We all went out to see the celebrated garden, which was quite ablaze with flowers, most of which, said our host,

'they told me could not possibly grow in Labrador. I,' he added, 'thought differently. Some, you see, I have had to put under glass, but most of the ordinary things grow very well—if they are well watered and manured. We have fresh milk, cream and butter and eggs from our poultry. Labrador is not such a bad place.'

"While Mrs. Smith went indoors to superintend dinner, the Factor conducted us over the farm.

"'I had great difficulty at first,' explained Mr. Smith, 'in prevailing on the labourers to plough and dig. Few of them had done any farming, and hardly any of them had ever seen anything growing that required any cultivation. Now each plants his own patch of root-crops, and it is quite surprising what a difference it has made. We have even turned to and built a good bit of a very fair road, as you see.'

"'I see, Mr. Smith,' said I. 'You're not a man to be content with conditions as you find them in this world.'

"'Who would be?' returned the Factor, smiling. 'Who would be? The world would be a very sad place if we couldn't make it a little better.'"

In the evening, after dinner, Mr. Donald Smith gave the party a most enjoyable description of the country, "showing a most intimate knowledge of the geology, its *fauna* and *flora,* and the native population. For a man situated off the beaten track, as he is, he displayed a surprising familiarity with current events. He showed me a great heap of newspapers; I laughed and told him that when the cable came he could stop his subscriptions and so save money."

The personality of Donald Smith deeply impressed Sir Leopold, who instantly recognised in the Company's representative at North-West River an extraordinarily gifted man; and the memory of their first meeting—in a lone, forsaken part of Labrador—remained always vivid in the minds of both of them. Twenty-six years later, on June

25th, 1886, Sir Leopold, wishing to congratulate his old host on having received the honour of knighthood, addressed the following letter to him from London :

My dear Sir Donald Smith,—Few of your friends can have greater satisfaction than myself at seeing your name in the Honours List, as I do this morning. It is now more than a quarter of a century since I landed from the *Bulldog* and shook hands with you at North-West River, Labrador, and I shall never forget my astonishment at the things I saw there as the impression your achievements (especially in the agricultural line) made upon me and my shipmates. I remember saying then, " Labrador won't hold this man." At the same time I am convinced that if you had remained that particular wilderness would have " blossomed as the rose." . . .

Believe me, my dear Sir Donald, very sincerely yours,

F. Leopold McClintock.

LORD STRATHCONA AMONG THE NATIVES
AT OTELNE
(From a Drawing by William Hind.)

INTERIOR OF THE HUDSON BAY POST
AT MINGAN, LABRADOR
(From a Water-Colour Sketch by William Hind, 1850.)

CHAPTER VI

REVISITS HIS NATIVE LAND (1862-65)

FOUR and twenty years had elapsed—years of hardship and incessant labour amidst surroundings bleak in the extreme—when, in 1862, Donald Smith was notified that he had been appointed to a chief factorship in the Company. This meant that henceforth he would have two eighty-fifth shares, instead of one, in the profits of the fur trade, a single share then producing about £350 sterling a year.

Never was promotion better earned. Donald Smith had not spared himself in the Company's interest; and he had converted the dwindling profits of Esquimaux Bay into an enterprise yielding large and steady returns. In sending him congratulations, somewhat belated owing to the distance which separated them, Dr. John Rae wrote: "The Company has done itself honour in recognising your services in Labrador. You are now in name, as you have been long in reality, the *chief factor* in the situation!"

Since Governor Simpson's death, Mr. Smith had repeatedly urged that the establishment at Ungava Bay, abandoned since McLean's time, should be reopened. He pointed out that the Moravian Brethren had gradually got the whole of the Ungava trade into their hands. In 1863 his recommendations were adopted.

At about the same time relations with Newfoundland became strained. A claim had been recently vigorously set up to the inclusion of Rigolet and North-West River within the boundaries of Newfoundland-Labrador. Mr. (afterwards Sir) James Winter was dispatched forthwith to collect revenue dues.

"Resist the imposition by all legal means," wrote the Company to Chief Factor Smith. But it soon became clear that it would be impossible—at any rate, unwise—to adhere to this policy.

"Personally, I do not consider this dodging the tax-collector either prudent or dignified," wrote the Chief Factor to his friend, Mr. Prowse, of St. John's, and he was considerably relieved when he was advised that "part of the duties," at least, imposed by the Newfoundland Legislature, must be paid—under protest.

Differences with Messrs. Hunt and Henley, especially in the conveyance of supplies, finally induced Mr. Smith to propose, in 1864, that their trading and fishing establishments, together with their dock at Swift's Cove, in Hamilton Inlet, should be bought by the Company. This was accordingly done. Furthermore, a vessel was purchased and manned by the Company to ply direct between London and the Labrador coast.

Although few had any inkling of the fact at the time, Donald Smith's well-merited appointment as Chief Factor proved to be amongst the very last made by the Company as reconstituted in 1821. In the following year the concern underwent an entire change, the herald of a series of changes whose history should now be chronicled.

In 1862 a friend wrote to Mr. Smith from London :

> You doubtless know that negotiations are on foot for the purchase of the Company's rights in the North-West. I hear of several people being approached. Whether the purchase will be by Government or private enterprise remains to be seen. In any case, it looks as if you might say farewell to any chances of being transferred to the interior of Rupert's Land. Some say it will prove the end of the fur trade when the beaver will flee before the axe and the plough.

What was actually happening had been foreseen by many. It was a logical result of the disclosures made before the Parliamentary Commission of 1857, of the agitation of the disaffected Red River settlers, of the report of Professors

Dawson and Hind, and of the persistent agitation in Upper Canada.

Even had Sir George Simpson lived, it is doubtful if his opposition would have continued. Shortly before his death he had avowed to Sir John Macdonald a complete change of front with regard to the development of the North-West. He had confessed his error and disavowed his former sophistries. No man knew better than Simpson that what he had written, both publicly and privately, in 1841, concerning the fertility and prospects of the country was true, and that what he had said before the Commission in 1857 was false. But on this latter occasion he, the local ruler, had been overruled.

In London, almost the entire Board, led by the aged Governor Berens, insisted that he should retract his own words, and reluctantly he had done so.

He realised clearly that it was vain for the Company much longer to oppose the inevitable. A transcontinental highway and telegraph system and the immigration of settlers into the North-West was as imminent as the rising and setting of the sun. This opinion of the Governor's could hardly be kept a secret—especially as he was a little ashamed of the figure he had cut before the Commission—and it soon began to be rumoured in the service.

On his return to Canada, in the autumn of 1857, and for the next few years, we find from the letters of the wintering partners, numerous indications that they were on the *qui vive* for developments which would vitally affect their interests. Up to Simpson's death in September, 1860, however, no suspicion was entertained that the Company would surrender to the progressive party, or—should circumstances compel the Board to do so—that their officers would not be consulted.

In spite of Simpson's life-long efforts to make these officers forget the fact, nothing could be clearer than that the Hudson's Bay Company was lineally as much a British

North American Institution as it was English, and, practically, far more Canadian than English. For forty years Simpson had effectually repressed co-operation among the wintering partners and stifled any real corporate expression on their part. At his death, however, the need for a leader and spokesman became evident. His successor, Mr. Alexander Grant Dallas, was virtually an outsider, imposed upon the wintering partners by the London Board. The Board to this day has continued the policy of appointing to the chief superintendence of their fur trade interests, individuals totally detached in their antecedents from any connection with the fur trade, and totally detached in their sympathies from the individuals operating it. The policy had been a complete success in the case of Simpson. But the times and conditions favoured him, and even Simpson could not have played the rôle much longer. After a brief attempt, Dallas threw up the task in disgust. It was too late for him to be ruled by a London Board, wholly ignorant of the conditions of the trade.

We have already seen how strong a feeling existed in Canada that the whole of the North-West Territory should be released from the bondage of the Company, that a boundary for Canada should be sought on the Pacific Ocean. "No charter," declared Mr. Van Koughnet, President of the Executive Council of Canada, in 1856, "can give a body of men control over half a continent."

The efforts made to test the validity of the Company's charter failed. In 1861, the Duke of Newcastle, then Colonial Secretary, entered into a copious and animated correspondence with the Company, and even drafted a measure to the effect that the Crown be empowered to take from time to time such portions of the territory as might be required for colonisation purposes, for which the Company was to receive compensation from the Imperial Government.

But no mutually satisfactory agreement could be arrived

at, and the Bill never reached Parliament. Nevertheless, the demand for the road and telegraph line to be constructed through the Company's territory, in order to unite Canada and British Columbia, and open up the fertile tract to settlers, became every day more popular as the knowledge of the country was increased by travellers, engineers, and surveyors.

On April 15th, 1862, the Canadian Government wrote to Governor Dallas, then in Montreal, expressing its urgent desire to come to terms with the Company and construct such a road as was proposed by Mr. Sandford Fleming, and others, through the Company's territory. In his reply, Dallas made it clear that partial concession of such land as must necessarily be alienated "would necessarily lead to the extinction of the Company." He added, however, that, although without instruction from the Board of Directors in London for his guidance, he believed he was safe in stating his conviction "that the Company would be willing to meet the wishes of the country at large by consenting to an equitable arrangement for the surrender of all the rights conveyed by the charter."

Events which were then veiled in mystery are now generally known. Mr. (afterwards Sir) Edward Watkin, a shrewd railway financier and one of the promoters of the Grand Trunk Railway of Canada, was one of the first Englishmen to seek practical advantage from the new situation. So extravagantly sanguine was Watkin's nature, that he wished to push the Grand Trunk Railway right across the continent. More than fifty years later his dream was realised, but in 1862 it was a preposterous mirage. Even he himself had to modify his ideas. He would begin, he said, by a transcontinental road and telegraph line, and a steamer traversing Lake Superior.

Collecting all the data on the subject, he placed them before the Duke of Newcastle, then Colonial Secretary, with a view to obtaining Imperial consent and co-operation.

Of course, the Hudson's Bay Company blocked the way. It was clear, therefore, that pressure must be brought to bear in the highest quarters upon the Company. If the directors could be induced to permit such a road and telegraph line to pass through the territory, and the Imperial Government would grant an adequate subsidy, Watkin promised to procure a syndicate of capitalists to carry out this great Imperial project.

The Duke of Newcastle, whose promptitude was as marked as his historic ancestor's procrastination, and whose knowledge of North American geography was notably superior, arranged an interview with Governor Berens. The latter affected to regard the proposal as a bolt from the blue.

"What," he cried, "sequester our very tap-root! Take away the fertile lands where the buffaloes feed! Let in all kinds of people to squat and settle, and frighten away the fur-bearing animals they don't hunt and kill! Impossible! Destruction, extinction of our time-honoured industry. If these gentlemen are so patriotic, why don't they buy us out?"

To this outburst the Duke is said to have quietly replied: "What is your price?" Governor Berens, thus pushed to the wall, stated that the Company would be prepared to sell out to the British Government for about a million and a half sterling.

Now, Watkin had his reasons for wishing the British Government to figure among the purchasing parties. Purchase of the Company, lock, stock and barrel, seemed the only way out of the difficulty. The Governor and Committee rather reluctantly made up their minds for a sale, for to withstand the project which Mr. Watkin and his fellow-promoters had so dearly at heart, grew increasingly dangerous. Watkin showed the Duke that, at the price named, there could be no risk of loss, because the fur trade could be separated from the land and privileges, and a

new joint stock company could be organised after the purchase to take over the trading-posts, the fleet of ships, the stock of goods, and the other assets, rights and privileges affecting trade.

Such a company, it was demonstrated, would pay a rental (redeemable after a term of years, if necessary) of three or three and a half per cent. on £800,000, leaving only £700,000 as the money value of a territory larger than Russia in Europe. The new company would raise additional capital of its own to modernise its business, to improve the means of intercourse between its posts, and to cheapen and expedite the transport to and fro of its merchandise. Further, it was pointed out that a land company could be organised in England, Canada, and America, which—on a similar principle of redemption rental—might take over the lands, leaving a reserve probably of a fourth of the whole as the unpaid-for property of the Government, at the price of £700,000. In fact, the Government would merely be called upon to lend £1,000,000 on the amplest security.

But awkward conditions were a corollary of the scheme. In the first place, the Hudson's Bay Territory must be erected into a Crown Colony, like British Columbia, and governed on the responsibility of the Empire. As to the cost of government, three suggestions were put forward. One was a moderate system of duties in and out of the territories, to be agreed upon between Canada and British Columbia on the one hand, and the United States of America on the other. The second was to sell a portion of the territory to America for five million dollars, which sum, it was known beforehand, could be obtained. The third suggestion was to open up portions of the fertile belt to colonisation from the United States.

It is profoundly interesting to learn that in considering the second plan, the Duke declared he would not sell, but that he would exchange; then, studying the map, " we put our fingers upon the Aroostook Wedge, in the State of

Maine; upon a piece of territory at the head of Lake Superior, and upon islands between British Columbia and Vancouver Island, which might be equivalent to rectification of the boundary on many portions of the westward along the 49th parallel of latitude."[1]

But the Duke's enthusiasm was tempered by prudence. Were he a Minister of Russia, he stated, he would certainly agree to purchase the land from the Hudson's Bay Company.

"It is," he said, "the right thing to do for many, for all, reasons; but Ministers in Great Britain must subordinate their views to the Cabinet." It appeared that the permanent officials of the Colonial Office were in positive opposition to the scheme. Consequently, the promoters of the Pacific transcontinental railway could hope for no direct pecuniary aid from the British Government. They must act for themselves.

After some correspondence, it was arranged that the promoters of the "Pacific Scheme," as it was called, should meet the Governor and Committee of the Hudson's Bay Company in an official interview. The date was December 1st, 1862.

"The room," writes Sir Edward Watkin in his *Memoirs*, "was the Court Room, dark and dirty. A faded green cloth, old chairs, almost black, and a fine portrait of Prince Rupert. . . . We met the Governor (Berens), Eden Colville, and Lyall only. On our part, there were Mr. C. C. Glyn (the late Lord Wolverton), Captain Glyn (the late Admiral Henry Glyn), and Messrs. Newmarch, Benson, Blake, and myself. Mr. Berens, an old man and obstinate, bearing a name to be found in the earliest lists of the Hudson's Bay shareholders, was somewhat insulting in his manner. We took it patiently. He seemed to be astounded at our assurance."

Presently the Governor showed himself more reasonable; a calmer discussion ensued. The promoters were informed

[1] *Memoirs*, Sir Edward Watkin.

that the Company would be ready to make a grant of land for the actual site of a road and telegraph through their territory. Nothing more would be vouchsafed unless, as they had informed the Duke of Newcastle, they were paid for all their rights and property.

"The offer," observed Sir Edward, "of a mere site of a road and ground for telegraph poles was no use. So, just as we were leaving, I said, 'We are quite ready to consider your offer to sell; and, to expedite matters, will you allow us to see your accounts, charters and so forth?' They promised to consult their court."

The result of this promise was that the promoters were put into communication with "old Mr. Roberts, aged eighty-five, their accountant, and with their solicitor, Mr. Maynard." Many interviews took place between these parties. On March 17th, 1863, Mr. Watkin met the Governor, Mr. Ellice, junior (son of Edward Ellice, who had been nicknamed the "Old Bear"), Mr. Matheson and Mr. Maynard at Hudson's Bay House. A number of account books were produced. The balance-sheet, however, was withheld.

Next day the chief promoter spent the forenoon with Mr. Roberts, the accountant, and his son and assistant at Hudson's Bay House. Mr. Roberts told him many odd things, one of which was that the Company had had a freehold farm of one thousand acres on the site of the present City of San Francisco, and had sold it just before the gold discoveries for £1,000 because two factors had quarrelled over it. He acquired a good deal of the inside knowledge of the affair, and learnt something of the competing North-West Company, amalgamated by Mr. Edward Ellice, its chief mover, many years before, with the Hudson's Bay Company. Pointing to some boxes in his private room one day, Mr. Maynard said, *"There are years of Chancery in those boxes if anyone else had them."*

In spite of the Duke's grave state of health, he expressed

the greatest interest in the progress of the negotiations The prospect of Government aid, however, was remote. Two ways were open to raise money for a purchase of the Company's rights: to secure the names and support of fifteen millionaires for £100,000 each; or to hand the proposed purchase over to the newly organised International Financial Society, who were eager to find some important enterprise to put before the public.

The first method seemed to recommend itself to the promoters, and the friends of the project could easily have underwritten the necessary amount. But the Company now announced that it would give no credit, and that the purchasers must "take up the shares as presented and pay for them over the counter." In the circumstances there was no alternative, and Mr. Richard Potter, acting for the capitalist, completed the negotiations. The shares were taken over and paid for by the International Financial Society, who issued new stock to the public to an amount which covered a large provision of new capital for the extension of business by the Company—and at great profit to themselves. As regards the new Hudson's Bay shareholders, their two hundred and one shares were subsequently reduced by returns of capital to one hundred and thirty one. From being quoted on the Exchange at thirty-seven, twenty years later, during the "land boom," the stock stood at two hundred and forty-one, and continued to advance.

The news of this stupendous transaction was soon noised abroad. As Chief Factor Smith long afterwards recalled, the morning that the Company's ship at Rigolet brought him the packet from England, and he drew forth a folded paper and read the prospectus of the International Financial Society, Limited, he trembled so that he could scarcely stand. Well, he said, could he understand old Governor Berens's feelings.

According to the prospectus the capital of the Hudson's Bay Company had been duly fixed at £2,000,000, of which

amount the International Financial Society, Limited, had obtained, and were prepared to offer to the public, £1,930,000.

The subscribers would be entitled to an interest, corresponding to the amount of their subscription, in :

1. The assets (exclusive of Nos. 2 and 3) of the Hudson's Bay Company, valued by competent valuers at £1,023,500.
2. The landed territory of the Company, held under their charter, and extending over an estimated area of more than 1,400,000 square miles, or upwards of 896,000,000 acres.
3. A cash balance of £370,000.

The net income available for dividend amongst stockholders of the Company secured, it was asserted, a minimum interest exceeding 4 per cent. on the above £2,000,000 stock.

Thanks to a London friend, Chief Factor Smith was one of the earliest to learn the character and extent of the transaction.

"It is a little unfortunate," he wrote to Mr. E. M. Hopkins, "that the directors have not seen fit to take us into their confidence. I have no doubt that they intend to deal with the wintering partners justly and loyally, but, in the meantime, what steps have been taken to ascertain our opinion or to safeguard our interests ?"

Many of the chief factors and chief traders promptly addressed a memorial to the company in London, requiring to be officially informed of the affair reported in the newspapers. Some of the bolder spirits counselled action of a determined nature. It was even predicted that a general resignation of the officers from Labrador to Sitka would ensue, followed by a confederation among themselves in order to carry on the fur trade in competition with the Company. At this juncture it only required one spirit more enterprising than the rest to have united the wintering partners in an action

which would have been instant, far-reaching and permanent in its effect. Previously, at the beginning of 1863, when rumours of the *pourparlers* with the Duke of Newcastle were afloat, some of the older officers had taken alarm and demanded to be represented in London. Amongst these was one of Donald Smith's earliest friends, Chief Factor George Barnston, to whom and his associates Secretary Thomas Fraser addressed the following significant letter from Hudson's Bay House, London, on February 27th, 1863:

> The Governor and Committee are at a loss to conceive how the interests of the commissioned officers of the Company can be considered as unrepresented; and I am directed to express their surprise that such a statement should have emanated from gentlemen who have so long been connected with the service, and who ought to be satisfied. Now as ever, the Governor and Committee consider themselves equally bound to protect the interests of the fur trade as those of the proprietors.
>
> The Chief Factors and Traders, whether on the active or retired list, may rest assured that should any surrender of the charter be made of which at present there is not the least probability, their interests will at least be as carefully protected by the Governor and Committee, as they could be by any arrangements such as are shadowed forth in the memorandum.
>
> In all the communications with the Colonial office, in the evidence taken before the Committee of the House of Commons, and in any declaration made in either House of Parliament by any friends of the Company, it has been invariably stated that should the Company surrender their Chartered Rights they would expect compensation for the officers and servants, as well as for the proprietors.

When the sale of the Company to Mr. Watkin's syndicate was effected, Mr. Smith, amongst the others, received the following letter from Governor Dallas:

> MONTREAL,
> *July* 28, 1863.
>
> GENTLEMEN,—I have now official information from the Governor and Committee in England of changes of proprietorship of the Hudson's Bay Company's stock recently made, and of the appointment of Sir Edmund Head, Bart., as the Governor of the Company in place of H. H. Berens, esquire, resigned.

They never received a cent. If Governor Simpson had been living it would have been decidedly otherwise!

Governor Dallas Explains

These changes have taken place in the ordinary manner of transfer from one proprietor to another, and while the capital of the Company has been increased to some extent, no alteration has been made in the constitution of powers of the Company, which remain as heretofore, "The Company of Adventurers trading into Hudson's Bay."

It is proposed, however, gradually to extend, where practicable, the operations of the Company, while preserving as much as possible its original objects and character. At the same time the position, rights, and duties of the gentlemen connected with the fur trade will not be lost sight of in any new undertakings, not provided for in the existing Deed Poll.

I shall be glad to meet and consult with such of the officers as may be within reach, and to receive in writing the views of such others as may not have that opportunity, and who have suggestions to make.

My best efforts will be made to organise such measures as may be necessary to promote the general interest, and especially to protect your rights as they at present exist. How this can best be effected is now under serious consideration.

In the meantime, I have to assure you of the earnest desire of the new Governor and Committee to promote alike the efficiency and success of the Company, and the personal well-being of all engaged in its widespread operations, confidently relying upon your hearty and cordial co-operation.

In return I have taken upon myself to assure the new Governor and Committee that he and they may rely upon our united efforts to secure the prosperity of the undertaking.

I have the honour to be, gentlemen, your obedient servant,

A. G. DALLAS.

As if to dissipate any lingering misgivings in the minds of the wintering partners, the new Governor, Sir Edmund Head, himself wrote to them in the following strain:

HUDSON'S BAY HOUSE, LONDON,
July 22, 1863.

SIR,—The change in the proprietary and in the governing body of the Hudson's Bay Company, which has recently taken place, may not unnaturally suggest doubts in the minds of the commissioned officers and servants of the Company with respect to the future course of trade, and their own position and prospects.

The Committee, therefore, think it right that I should inform you of their intention of carrying on the fur trade, as it has been hitherto

× Governor Dallas had only been a few ye
"Hudson's Bay" had previously spent his life
in the China notable firm of Jardine, Ma
Theson & Company.

carried on, under the provisions of the Deed Poll, and their desire to extend their operations in this particular branch rather than to diminish it.

Whatever collateral objects of a different character the Company may hereafter have in view, it is not intended that these pursuits should interfere with the fur trade, or that the gentlemen connected with the Company should necessarily take part in them, so as to have their interests affected by them. On the contrary, these interests will ever receive the most favourable consideration on the part of myself and Committee. We know the zeal and energy which has always characterised the service of the Company, and we are prepared at all times to do our utmost to secure the welfare and increase the comfort of the officers and servants.

I beg to invite you, on my own part, to free and unreserved communication, through the usual channel, with reference to the interests of the Company and its affairs. Any suggestions of yours in regard to the trade and its development or the goods sent out by the Company will receive due consideration by the Committee.—I am, Sir, your most obedient servant,

EDMUND HEAD (*Governor*).

The first step in the reorganisation of the Hudson's Bay Company's trade was to abolish or modify the Deed Poll of 1821. Under this instrument the wintering partners (both chief factors and chief traders) had certain vested rights which could not be interfered with without compensation. In 1863 the eighty-five shares of the wintering partners were apportioned as follows:

15 chief factors	30 shares
37 chief traders	37 „
10 retired chief factors ..	13 „
10 retired chief traders ..	5 „
	85 shares

In a letter to Governor Dallas on the question, Mr. Smith wrote:

You will readily understand that the officers of this district share to the full the apprehensions of the officers of the other departments, not the less so because our distance from the seat of council renders it difficult, if not impossible, to conjoin with the others in taking measures to make our wishes known. Nevertheless, we have every confidence that justice will be done to our interests.

The New Directors

Privately, in his letters to Messrs. Barnston, Swanston and W. L. Hardisty, he was not free from misgivings. The directors of the company, reconstructed as has just been intimated, were the Right Honourable Sir Edmund Head, K.C.B. (lately Governor-General of Canada), Curtis Miranda Lampson, Eden Colville, George Lyall, Daniel Meinertzhagen, James Stuart Hodgson, John Henry, William Schroeder and Richard Potter. Of these, Head was chosen mainly because he had been a Governor-General of Canada; whilst four of the others were merely London financiers.

Watkin, having made his profits as promoter of the company, then proceeded to Canada to negotiate with the Canadian Government on behalf of a subsidiary concern of that which had virtually swallowed up the Hudson's Bay Company, calling itself the Atlantic and Pacific Transit and Telegraph Company. But the Canadian Government wanted the broad, open highway to the Pacific, and not merely settlers and telegraph and postal systems. Unless the Atlantic and Pacific Transit and Telegraph Company were prepared to undertake the construction of the road with the telegraph line Sir John Macdonald's Government could not " in the present condition of the Canadian exchequer, and with the important questions of boundary, territorial jurisdiction and form of government in the vast territory proposed to be opened still unsettled, recommend the acceptance of the ' heads of proposal ' as submitted by them, and conditionally approved by the Duke of Newcastle."

The Canadian Ministry further stated, " that in view of the recent change in the constitution and objects of the Hudson's Bay Company which, from the correspondence laid before the House of Lords, appears to have been effected, and the claims which the new organisation have reiterated, with the apparent sanction of the Duke of Newcastle, to territorial rights over a vast region not included in their

original charter, it is highly expedient that steps be taken to settle definitely the North-Western boundary of Canada."

They recommended, therefore, that correspondence should be opened with the Imperial Government, " with a view to the adoption of some speedy, inexpensive and mutually satisfactory plan to determine the important question," inasmuch as " the claims of Canada can be asserted to all that portion of Central British America which can be shown to have been in the possession of the French at the period of the cession in 1763."

Meanwhile, the International Financial Society, Limited, had quietly disappeared, leaving in its stead a reorganised Hudson's Bay Company. Sir Edmund Head, as Governor, was prepared to make a complete sale of all the Company's rights and ownerships, either to the Imperial authorities or to Canada.

" The condition of the vast region lying on the North-West of the settled portions of the Province," declared Lord Monck, the Governor-General of Canada, addressing Parliament in February, 1864, " is daily becoming a question of great interest." In the course of the ensuing debate on the address, the Honourable William McDougall, Minister of Crown Lands, who was officially concerned in the matter, stated that the Government of Canada had reached a conclusion upon the advisability of determining whether the Red River territory belonged to Canada or to some other country. McDougall announced as his individual view that Canada was entitled to claim as a portion of its soil all that part of the North-West territory that could be proved to have been in the possession of the French at the time of the cession of Canada to the British.

It was not at all likely that the Duke of Newcastle would share such a view, or that he would entirely acquiesce with the suggestion of Sir Edmund Head on behalf of the Company. Under the dates March 11th and April 5th, 1864, he had formulated the appended proposals :

1. The Company to surrender to the Crown its territorial rights.

2. To receive one shilling for every acre sold by the Crown, but limited to £150,000 in all, and to fifty years in duration, whether or not the receipts attained that amount.

3. To receive one-fourth of any gold revenue, but limited to £100,000 in all, and to fifty years in duration.

4. To have one square mile of adjacent land for every lineal mile constructed of road and telegraph to British Columbia.

These proposals were carefully considered by Sir Edmund Head and his fellow-directors. At a meeting on April 13th it was decided to accept them, subject to certain alterations. It was urged that the amount of payments within fifty years should either not be limited or else placed at the sum of £1,000,000 sterling instead of a quarter of that sum. The Company also suggested that a grant be made to it of five thousand acres of wild land for every fifty thousand acres sold by the Crown.

In the meantime the Duke of Newcastle had been succeeded in the Colonial Secretaryship by Mr. Cardwell. On June 6th the latter wrote to say that he could not entertain the amendments of the Company. Here was a new *impasse,* and for several months nothing was done. In December the Board again met, and again showed their desire for an amicable and reasonable arrangement. They even offered to accept £1,000,000 for the territory.

Had Sir Edmund Head and his colleagues in London seen fit instantly to make terms with the wintering partners in 1864, much heart-burning might have been prevented and a very great deal of violence and political strife been averted. There would have been no Riel rebellion. Moreover, the bargain would have been a good one for the London Board; a bargain they were compelled to make with Chief Factor Smith, acting on behalf of the wintering partners in 1871, actually cost them £107,000. In 1864, however, the transfer of territory to the Dominion of Canada had not taken place, the claim of the wintering partners to an interest in the land

had not been pressed. Therefore, if the rights of the wintering partners under the Deed Poll of 1821 had been extinguished, the grievance under which they subsequently laboured, and which they and their successors sustain to this day, would have been removed.

Meanwhile, the Chief Factor at Esquimaux Bay chafed in his isolation. Events, likely profoundly to affect his future, were happening on the other side of the Atlantic. He longed to be on the spot and judge their character for himself. On November 5th, 1863, he applied for the furlough to which he was now entitled, and in the following year, at the close of the season, he set out in a fishing schooner for St. John's. The passage was an unusually rough one. Mr. Smith fell ill, and was in a helpless condition when he arrived in the Newfoundland capital. His feet were found to be frost-bitten. He was carried ashore and then conveyed to the house of a friend, where he was nursed for several days. That friend's daughter still possesses the Scotch plaid he left upon the conclusion of his visit. "Take care of it for me," he charged them. "I value it because it was given me by my mother when I left Scotland as a lad."

From Halifax he took passage in a steamer, and early in December, 1864, after a fortnight's voyage, he landed at Liverpool. He had been absent from his native land for more than twenty-six years.

From Liverpool Mr. Smith proceeded without delay to Forres, where he found his mother, although now almost totally blind, in good health and overjoyed to welcome him.

There are many alive to-day who recall Mrs. Alexander Smith during her son's sojourn, the quiet dignity and restraint of the old lady in her black silk dress, seated in an arm-chair by the window, her gentle voice, the slight flush on her aged features, and the tremulous lip when her son Donald was by her side.

"He told me," writes Miss Hurlbatt, "of his visit home to his aged mother, his pride in trying to picture to her how

in Canada of that day, when many years were spent in barren wilds, yet there were occasions when the stream of life reached many centres and brought the great, the rich, the gay into company with those who had often known utter solitude.

" His mother's quiet hearing of his talk made him strive to heighten the contrasts of his story, assuring her that ladies, titled ladies, the great ones of the earth, had found their way to the then small Hudson's Bay centres, until at last she spoke. Their greatness, the gaieties did not impress her. ' Tell me,' she said, ' were they *gentlewomen ?* ' "

His native town of Forres Mr. Smith found little changed; some of his schoolfellows were still there. Mr. Robert Watson, in whose office he had imbibed his small stock of legal lore, received his former clerk cordially.

Forres was just then in the throes of a railway boom. In the previous year the last rivet had been fastened in place in the great Spey viaduct, and the Craigellachie Junction Railway was opened for traffic. On the same day (July 1st, 1863) the Great North of Scotland Railway, in conjunction with the Keith and Dufftown and Strathspey Railways, began operating the whole system of the Morayshire railways. Donald Smith took delight in travelling from Forres to Elgin, and from there to Craigellachie and Archiestown (where his father was born), and along the Spey to Grantown and northwards back to Forres.

After some weeks in Forres he visited Edinburgh, and from there went on to London, where he reported himself to Hudson's Bay House. Here he made the acquaintance of the Governor, Sir Edmund Head, Mr. (afterwards Sir) Curtis Lampson, Eden Colville and others of the directors. That he made a favourable impression is attested by the following passage in a letter written by Mr. Colville to Sir Curtis Lampson :

Smith, the officer in charge of our Esquimaux Bay district, is here, and gives a good account of our affairs in that region, where he has been stationed for many years. As he is just the sort of man

you would like to meet, shrewd and well informed upon every topic relating to that *terra incognita* of the British Empire, I have asked him to dine with us on the 14th.

The result of this meeting was that Lampson was most favourably impressed by "Labrador" Smith (as he calls him in one of his letters), and especially entertained by the Chief Factor's accounts of his sub-Arctic farm. That this favourable impression was mutual is evinced by the following extract from a letter of Mr. Smith to Robert Hamilton:

> You are all totally misinformed both as to the character and status of Mr. C. M. Lampson. He is not an *American*, but is and has long been a naturalised British subject with enlarged and patriotic views on all matters connected with the interests of this country. Moreover, he has the highest possible opinion of the Company's officers and servants, and a desire to do them justice. He told me last evening that there never was a body of men in the service of any corporation in the world of higher intelligence, sobriety, and loftiness of character. His views on the Oregon Boundary question were at the time diametrically opposed to those of the American Government.

During his sojourn in London Mr. Smith also met Mr. Robert Lowe (afterwards Lord Sherbrooke), with whom he afterwards corresponded. He attended more than one debate in the House of Commons. But his chief concern was, of course, to make himself master of the conditions and prospects of the new order of things in Fenchurch Street, and the attitude and proposals of the committee and shareholders.

One of the first persons not officially connected with the Company with whom Mr. Smith formed an acquaintance in London was Mr. Alexander Kennedy Isbister, a native of Assiniboia, who had served a brief apprenticeship in the fur trade, had become a schoolmaster, and prospered in his profession.[1] For many years past he had taken a keen interest in the affairs of his native land. It was through Mr.

[1] He was for a long time headmaster of the Stationers' School, in Bolt Court, Fleet Street, London, and resided in Dr. Johnson's old house.

Fears for the Future

Isbister that Mr. Smith received a copy of the following document, signed by Wm. Mactavish and other chief factors who were beginning to be alarmed about their future.

FORT GARRY,
October 10, 1864.

TO THE COMMISSIONED OFFICERS IN CHARGE OF DISTRICTS,
NORTHERN DEPARTMENT.

GENTLEMEN,—As most of you are aware, the members of the Northern Council assembled here this spring, taking into consideration the low amount of remuneration for their services obtained of late years by the country partners of the trade, the unsatisfactory prospect for the future held out by the existing Deed Poll, together with the very doubtful tendency of the various expenses proposed for developing the country by the new proprietors of Hudson's Bay stock, addressed a letter to the Governor and Committee in London on behalf of themselves and brother officers, proposing certain changes in the arrangements which have so long existed between the country partners and the stockholders. In substance, the propositions made were as follows: Either that a minimum annual income of £350 should be warranted to each Chief Trader and £700 to each Chief Factor under the existing Deed Poll, or else that the Deed Poll itself should be entirely done away with and the income of the officers of the country should no longer be in proportion to the profits of the trade, but that every officer should be paid a fixed salary, according to the value of his services, and that the proprietors should make equitable arrangements to buy up the retired interests due to existing country partners under the present Deed Poll.

Enclosed you will find a copy of the answer received from the Governor and Committee upon which few remarks are necessary. You will observe that they acknowledge the advisability of some change, together with their willingness to meet our wishes, and propose that delegates from both parties should meet in London with a view to the settlement of the matter. The great objection to this course is the delay that must occur before the negotiations can be brought to a conclusion, and Chief Factor William Mactavish has written to recommend that the Committee should send out a proposition of what they consider on their part a fair arrangement for both parties, with a view to the consent of the individual officers in the country being obtained to it if it should prove satisfactory. In the event, however, of their being unwilling to commit themselves to such a course, he has requested them to forward, with as little delay as possible, a form for the appointment of delegates, which

they will consider sufficiently binding on the officers in the country in a legal point of view, and no delay will take place here in transmitting such form to the different officers for their signatures, with a view to enabling whoever may be appointed by them as delegate to act as early as possible next summer.

The Committee observe that the officers now on the retired list must also consent to the appointments of the delegates; but we do not see the necessity for such a course, and it would certainly occasion great delay in the settlement of the matter, as they are scattered in different quarters of the globe, and there would be great difficulty in obtaining their signatures. Those gentlemen retired under the existing Deed Poll and must abide by its tenor or make a separate arrangement for themselves; certainly no course that they could adopt could legally invalidate any new deed between the proprietors and the present acting partners in the country, and no feeling of honour or delicacy binds us to the past generation of officers, however strong the future claims of that generation may be on our good faith and wisdom.

We have to request that you will take the necessary step to acquaint any commissioned officers that may be under your command with the contents of this letter and its enclosure.

While absent from London Mr. Smith received the following from Chief Factor James Anderson:

What I fear we must all make up our minds to is that the Hudson's Bay Company as it at least existed since 1821 has passed away, and been replaced by another organisation, as far as the London directorate is concerned, with different views and objects. This change has been made without our consent, on the supposition that our interests would be unaffected. Such a supposition is, of course, untenable. The wintering partners represent the fur trade, and the whole object and mainspring of the old Company was the fur trade. Moreover, the rights to the lands not comprised in the original charter was the right acquired by the partners of the North-West Company, who enacted the Deed Poll of 1821.

Writing to Mr. Barnston, Mr. Smith himself said:

We must be prepared not to receive very much sympathy from the new shareholders or the new Board. You will remember that Governor Shepherd told the Colonial Secretary distinctly that "no change in the condition or settlement of the country could be carried into effect without their willing co-operation and assistance; their

just claims must be considered in any new arrangements." Unfortunately, our danger comes from the stockholders, who do not and will not trouble to understand the situation. As Governor Shepherd said, "They are of the usual class of investors, indifferent to any other question in the present discussion than the security of their capital and dividends."

Little did Mr. Smith then imagine that six short years later he would be chosen to go to London as the spokesman of the wintering partners.

In June, 1865, having spent several pleasant months in London and Scotland, Mr. Smith was ready to return to Esquimaux Bay. According to ancient custom, the directors of the Company dined at Greenwich on the day preceding the departure of the ship, when that great flow of speech-making took place which Ballantyne has amusingly satirised in his *Hudson Bay*.

On the present occasion Mr. Smith received an intimation that he would be called upon to reply to the toast of "The Commissioned Officers." He carefully thought out an appropriate speech, and the notes, in his own handwriting, which are still in existence, show his intention not to rise in his place unprepared.

At length the evening came.

The banquet was at its height of conviviality when the chairman arose and called upon Chief Factor Donald A. Smith, of Esquimaux Bay, to respond to the toast of "The Commissioned Officers of the Honourable Hudson's Bay Company."

All eyes turned to Mr. Smith's place at the table.

It was vacant.

The man who could face a savage bear in the wilderness, who could five years later assert himself against the dictator, Louis Riel, and then brave the wrath of Sir John A. Macdonald and his whole party, flinched before this ordeal. He had silently left the room, and the next morning explained to the chairman that, being "unaccustomed to public

× Had served 6 years with the Company. Became a writer of books — his first "Every day life in Hudson's Bay," is very interesting.

speaking," he had shrunk from making an exhibition equally painful to himself and his auditors.

Privately, he resolved that never again would he lose any opportunity of speaking in public. He kept his word, even if, on one occasion already noted, he was reduced to the expedient of reciting *in extenso* a metrical verse of the Psalms.

CHAPTER VII

TAKING LEAVE OF LABRADOR (1865-68)

ONE June morning in 1865, a salute from the cannon in front of the agent's house at Rigolet welcomed back Chief Factor Smith, on board the *Ocean Nymph,* to the scene of his duties.

His trip to Britain marked a fresh turning-point in his career. He was thenceforward no longer hidden in obscurity; his character and abilities were personally known to the reigning powers in Fenchurch Street; and more than one of the new directors recognised in the officer in charge of Esquimaux Bay and Ungava a man of great experience, clear-brained and of consummate resource. He had also made a few friends on the other side of the Atlantic. And events were looming up on the horizon which would give Donald Alexander Smith the opportunity he sought.

But in Canada he was as yet unknown—even amongst the bulk of the officers of the service. Unknown he was, too, to the members of the Council of the Fur Trade of Assiniboia, who were prone to consider Labrador as almost outside the scheme of things, as they habitually thought of that scheme in the Hudson's Bay Company's service. As for the merchants, the capitalists, the politicians and the journalists of the Canadian metropolis, neither Labrador nor its recognised leading spirit had for them existence either objective or subjective.

Yet it was to Canada—now within measurable distance of the Confederation of all the Provinces of British North America—rather than to Britain—that Mr. Smith's mind was turned and his awakening ambitions were directed.

When he left the Thames in 1838 a rebellion had just been

crushed in the upper and lower Provinces. Before he departed from British shores in 1865 he knew that Lee had surrendered at Appomatox, and that the long struggle in America was over; and he realised that the effect on Canada and Canadian mercantile enterprise of the new order of things, which would now be ushered in, could not fail to be marked.

In the summer of 1866 he was able to visit Montreal, where he found the question of the Fenian raids[1] the reigning topic of conversation. In this connection he addressed a letter to the Company on June 8th.

Some years earlier the Company's property and the lives of its servants had been imperilled by the *habitant* uprising, and the memory of those stirring times was vividly present with him.

Information having reached the Canadian Government from many quarters that an inroad was imminent, and this information being supported by police reports of suspicious persons having been recognised entering Canada from the United States, as well as by open avowals at the Fenian public meetings, the Executive Council passed a minute on March 7th calling out for duty 10,000 Canadian volunteers.

About the end of May the Fenian preparations were completed. Stores of arms and ammunition had been placed at convenient stations along the frontier, and the word had been given for an attack. On May 31st the Fenians began the march, and detachments of 200 and 300 men, calling themselves railway labourers on their way to the West, began to arrive at Buffalo and St. Albans from the large towns. By the evening of that day a body of Fenians, estimated at upwards of 1,000, had reached Buffalo, and on the morning of June 1st 850 of them crossed over to Fort Erie, on the opposite bank of the Niagara River. Several arrests were made at St. Albans and elsewhere, and Roberts, the President of

[1] *See* Appendix B.

the Fenian Senate and chief instigator of the raid, was taken into custody at New York.

Immediately on receipt of the intelligence of the invasion, Major-General Napier pushed on by rail to Chippewa a force consisting of artillery and regular troops under Colonel Peacocke, 16th Regiment.

The Fenians did not await his arrival; they recrossed the river during the night of June 2nd-3rd, to the number of about 750 men, and were immediately arrested by the authorities of the United States.

Lord Monk thus reported to the British Government:

> I am happy to be able to inform you that the officers of the United States Government appear to have exerted themselves to prevent any assistance being supplied to the invaders. We have sixty-five prisoners in our possession, who have been by my direction committed to the common gaol at Toronto to await trial. I think it creditable, both to the military and militia authorities of Canada, that they were in a position within twenty-four hours after the invasion of a Province at such a point of the enemy's own selection to place opposite to him such a force as compelled his precipitate retreat without even risking an engagement.

"Nevertheless," wrote Mr. Smith, "I formed so low an opinion of these wretched Fenian troops as not to have been able to look upon the whole affair in anything like the same serious light in which it has generally been viewed by those who have not come so closely in contact with them." He had met a large body of Fenians while on his way from New York to Montreal, and was impressed neither by their discipline nor martial character.

* * * * * *

"I first saw Sir Donald Smith on his visit to Montreal in 1866," wrote a Chief Factor who died within the past decade. "He had been spending some days at Lachine with his wife and two children, where his mother-in-law, Mrs. Richard Hardisty, then resided and continued to reside until 1876.

"One morning he said, 'I have a cousin in Montreal,

Mr. George Stephen, whom I have never seen. Do you know anything about him? He's a prominent man in the woollen trade, I believe.'

"I said I had heard of Mr. Stephen, who had been a junior partner with his cousin, William Stephen, in a firm of wholesale drapers, and was now established for himself.

"As Mrs. Smith had some shopping to do, we all went into the city together. I gave him Mr. Stephen's address, and we parted company. A couple of hours later I met all the Smiths in St. James's Street, loaded down with parcels, and Mr. Smith carrying a rather gaudy carpet bag. He stopped to show me the bag, and asked my opinion of it. 'It's just the thing for the Labrador,' he said. 'It'll make a great hit with the Indians there.'

"I inquired if he had met his cousin, Mr. Stephen. 'Oh, yes,' he said. 'I went in and had a few moments' conversation with him.'

"'I suppose he was glad to see you, eh?'

"Mr. Smith seemed a little embarrassed at the question, but his wife burst forth. 'He wasn't glad at all. Why should Mr. Stephen be glad to see country cousins like us—all the way from Labrador? I wish,' she added shyly, 'I wish he had waited until he had met Mr. Stephen before buying that red carpet bag. But he wouldn't let me carry it, and the rest of us waited outside.'"

Such was the first meeting between the first cousins and future peers, Donald Alexander Smith and George Stephen.

It is reminiscent of other homely encounters in the lives of self-made men. There was certainly in it little suggestion of future intimacy or cordiality, nothing to augur the great events with which later history was to link the names of these two men.

George Stephen was born in 1831 at Dufftown, on the borders of Elgin, his mother being Elspeth Smith, Alexander's aunt. He had embarked in the drapery business in

Aberdeen, and in 1850, on the invitation of his cousin, William Stephen, who had established a thriving business in Montreal, he came out to Canada to assist in the enterprise. His natural ability and a very pleasing and impressive personality quickly insured his promotion. He became a buyer in the firm of William Stephen, in which capacity he was sent annually to London, and eventually became a partner.

The firm prospered; the accumulation of profits gave opportunities for investment of which young Stephen availed himself in so adroit and masterful a manner as occasionally to stagger the head of the firm. There are some still living in Montreal who remember Mr. William Stephen and his uneasiness over some of his young relative's financial excursions. Not infrequently his consent to some arrangement or other would be prefaced by the half serious comment, "Well, it is clear George is going to ruin the firm, so it might as well come now as at a later time."

Despite the inauspicious nature of the first interview between George Stephen and Mr. Smith, it was not long before the latter resolved to cultivate a closer association, and before he left Montreal he was to see Mr. Stephen in another rôle.

Canada's commercial capital was, during that July, stirred by what was called the alarming Free Trade tendencies of the Finance Minister, Hon. A. T. Galt, who had just proposed in Parliament a reduction in the tariff on manufactured goods. Meetings of protest against the Budget were held in Montreal. At one of these the Mayor presided. This was Mr. Smith's first contact with those national issues and contentions which were afterwards, when he entered the political arena, to lead him to support the party of Sir John Macdonald and the principles of the National Policy.

The Mayor asked his hearers to look round and see what the tariff had done for Canada and Montreal, and then, he said, it may be judged that the change was impolitic and bad. They need not go beyond Montreal, they had only to

go to the Place d'Armes and see the good effect of increased production. If this were removed the young men and women would have to leave and go to the States. He trusted the remonstrances from the mechanics and manufacturers of Montreal would be effectual, and regretted that the Government, which had his confidence and support, should spring a mine now when they were on the eve of other great changes. He did not ask anything, he declared, but what was reasonable, nor would the city of Montreal ask for any prohibitory tariff. They simply asked the Government to let well alone. All could see how prosperous Canada had become within the last few years. By the change now proposed that prosperity would disappear.

According to another speaker, development was impossible if they were prepared to continue in a state of pupilage and went in for sweeping away all incidental protection. There was a large Provincial debt for which the interest must be provided, and, he asked, why should not the revenue be obtained by an impost on manufactured goods which would be giving no unfair advantage, but would have the effect of providing a market? If, after investing large sums in the confidence that one course of policy would be continued, the Government suddenly cut off the market by an entire change, it would cause complete ruin, the population would drift away, and the country would be found to take a very subordinate position.

Another merchant, afterwards one of Mr. Smith's friends, declared that he had been fifty years in Montreal and knew something of the city and its interests. He remembered when they had no manufactures and nothing to employ the men in winter, and he had seen 900 men in jail at once, not as criminals, but to obtain relief and be kept there for months when there was nothing to do. It was only within the last twenty years, he said, that there had been any manufacturing employment, and these works were only in their infancy. Only since their establishment had there been any

fair measure of prosperity, and it was then very rare to see men unemployed congregating to look for work. For five months in the year the country was shut so that there was no labouring the ground, and unless there were manufactures the people would be beggared or would have to go to another country to live.

At this point a gentleman arose. It was Mr. Smith's cousin, George Stephen. He boldly defended the Budget by a strong Free Trade speech which was received with a storm of hisses and other signs of disapproval, and the meeting eventually broke up in confusion. Nevertheless, Mr. Smith was profoundly impressed as much by his cousin's bearing and courage as by his arguments; and he afterwards confessed that this speech of Stephen's gave a new bias to his thoughts. At any rate, it sharpened his interest in the fiscal policy of the Government and particularly in the commercial interests of Montreal.

In short, the neophyte from Labrador had undergone his initiation.

The following letter possesses some interest as having been addressed by Mr. Stephen to a staunch Free Trader in Montreal, afterwards famous as Sir William Macdonald.

MONTREAL,
July 4, 1866.

DEAR MR. MACDONALD,—I am very glad that you approve of the sentiments I expressed at the meeting. Many of our people are misled by the newspapers and current talk, and do not know what is good for them. I am told it is a wonder I wasn't lynched, but I spoke only for myself. If my name is of any use you are welcome to it.—Yours truly,

GEORGE STEPHEN.

The result of this letter was the foundation of a local Free Trade League.

Another incident which occurred during Mr. Smith's sojourn in Montreal must be noted. In this July the first dispatches were received by the newly completed Atlantic telegraph. Mr. Smith took a deep interest in it, and its

possibilities fired his mind, as is shown by the following extract from a letter he addressed to a friend:

> We have the London market reports of yesterday, and we will shortly have daily reports from Europe which will put the shipping business on a new footing. Those shipping produce by ocean steamers can hereafter operate with greater certainty of results with reference to the state of British markets. It will have a powerful effect on ocean steamship stock, and the existence of ocean telegraph lines will probably bring about the substitution of steam for sailing vessels. I entirely agree with the writer of the article in to-day's *Gazette* that the ocean telegraph, while tending to reduce profits, will also reduce losses.[1]

During his stay in Montreal Mr. Smith also met Mr. E. H. King, manager of the Bank of Montreal; Mr. (afterwards Sir) Hugh Allan, the famous shipowner; and several other Montreal worthies in the sphere of finance.

On August 1st Mr. Smith left on the Company's steamer *Ripple* for Esquimaux Bay. There sailed with him a young apprentice clerk, Mr. W. D. B. Scott, at present manager of the Labrador Company, who cherishes many memories of his Chief Factor's conversation and kindness to him on this journey, and for the several subsequent years that he served under him at North-West River. On August 8th the vessel arrived at Rigolet. After the labour incidental to loading of the homeward-bound ship, and packing of

[1] The profits of commerce will be less than heretofore, and losses will also be less; and the causes of sudden revulsions and periodical commercial disasters will in a great measure be removed. We see in this new daily communication between America and Europe the great regulator of trade. We see in it a new and controlling influence in the affairs of this continent, financially and commercially; perhaps also politically. That sympathetic impulse which moves the great masses of the leaders in commerce and public affairs in Europe will be communicated to the same class of persons on this side of the Atlantic before its effect has had time to die out or be killed by the thoughts, heretofore arising, that affairs may have changed, and we will wait the next news, and therefore its influence will be received and felt in all departments of civilised life. But it is quite impossible to estimate the wonderful changes which this new connecting agent may produce. The mind may travel forward into the great future, speculating upon probabilities which are more than possible to an unlimited extent. The ocean telegraph is the completing link in the progressive influence of steam, and its addition to this wonderful adjunct of civilised progress will be felt, especially on this continent, in almost every branch of industrial pursuit, as well as in commercial life.—*Montreal Gazette*, July 31, 1866.

From the Portrait by Frank Holl, R.A.

SIR GEORGE STEPHEN, BART.

In 1891 Sir George was raised to the peerage, and assumed the title, Lord Mount Stephen

salmon had been disposed of, the Chief Factor returned to North-West River.

This was to be his last winter in Esquimaux Bay. He returned to find that, in consequence of his many representations, a competent mineralogist, Mr. Bauerman, had arrived in the Company's new ship, the *Labrador,* and was now spending the summer in surveying all that part of the coast supposed to contain minerals. The expedition was of value, but some of the shareholders expressed themselves as disappointed because no gold mines were found!

The Ungava district having been reopened, the *Labrador* undertook a sealing voyage, not along the Newfoundland coast, as Chief Factor Smith recommended, but to Greenland instead, an enterprise not attended with much success.

That autumn and winter was a busy one for Mr. Smith. He opened a correspondence with Mr. Stephen, and also began to make inquiries concerning certain industrial and commercial enterprises which were then on foot in Montreal. From this time, too, dates his direct interest in Canadian finance, for it should be mentioned that, as a result of frugality, he was master of several thousand pounds, the bulk of which he had invested in the stock of the Bank of Montreal.

His reputation for probity and shrewdness had already caused several of the clerks, and even one Chief Trader as early as 1865, to entrust him with their savings in preference to sending them to the gentlemen in charge of the Company's "Cash Account," as it was called, in Montreal. It had long been a practice of the Company, and, indeed, was a necessity where the commissioned officers were far removed from the financial centres, to retain considerable sums for investment (frequently amounting to the entire earnings of its salaried officers for a term of years), and paying, therefore, commonly, a higher rate of interest than could elsewhere be obtained. An official was chosen especially

for this purpose, and in his capacity of banker to the wintering partners, even found means to add materially to the Company's exchequer.

It was natural that this branch of the business should attain quite respectable proportions. Men immured for many years together in remote solitudes have few opportunities for pecuniary extravagances; and when this race of industrious hermits happen to be Scotsmen, even allowing for any strain of Highland recklessness, it was reasonable to expect that of the tens of thousand dollars distributed annually in profits to the wintering partners, seven-eighths of this sum total should pass into the hands of the Company's official banker. Originally, the Company had granted a uniform rate of interest of four per cent. to the funds entrusted to it, but since Sir George Simpson's death, the temptation to make special outside investments had increased. Moreover, since 1860, opportunities for safe investment were growing. The railways and steamships began to afford this in abundance, and a large number of new banks, insurance and trust companies offered tempting inducements to the small capitalist.

In 1866, Mr. E. M. Hopkins, who for some time had been engaged as Sir George Simpson's secretary, was in charge of the Private Cash business. If to many of the factors and traders, whose worldly wealth was in his hands, Hopkins seemed unduly conservative, this was the result of his training. He frankly avowed that he thought Canada was, on the strength of Confederation then close at hand, advancing a little too fast. Many of the enterprises so highly lauded in the prospectuses scattered broadcast in such confusion amongst the investing community, were, he believed, "unstable and illusory." And he was not alone in this opinion. Many responsible Canadian merchants looked with frank misgivings upon nascent native enterprises as worthy only of the attention of the less sagacious and more speculative British investor, and confined their

own operations to sound and proved British joint stock companies.

This timid spirit survived down to a comparatively recent period in Canadian commercial history. None the less, a change began to be noted in the late '60's, when more reliance came to be placed upon native commercial and industrial resources. This movement must be ascribed to a small group of Montreal merchants and capitalists with whom Donald Alexander Smith was soon closely to ally himself.

At Halifax, in the late autumn of 1864, when he invested £100 for a friend in the cargo of a small steamer about to undertake to run the blockade and put into Wilmington, North Carolina, he had noted the almost spectacular profits which were being made out of the contraband trade with the Confederacy. On the previous voyage the cargo had resulted in a profit for the adventurers of 200 per cent. Despite this, however, he himself had counselled against the investment.

"In the first place," he wrote, "the risk is too great; and in the second place, the whole enterprise is against my principles." Still, he was greatly relieved when the cargo was safely landed and paid for in gold, his friend actually receiving 150 per cent. on the money he had risked. It is now known that many reputable Canadians, as well as Glasgow and Liverpool merchants, made large fortunes out of the contraband trade during the Civil War; and at least two retired Hudson's Bay Chief Factors trusted considerable sums in these most precarious transactions.

Meanwhile, letters from England continued to inform him of the fortunes and plans of the Company. The Board was striving its utmost to sell to Her Majesty's Government, for an enormous sum, territory which, in the opinion of the Hon. George Brown, sent to England as a Canadian Commissioner, "they had no title under their charter." Mr. Brown expressed also the opinion that it was the part

of the Imperial authorities to secure the extinction of the Company's proprietary rights and exclusive privileges of trade, and that then Canada should step in and undertake the duties of government.

In June, 1866, the Canadian Ministry, while contesting in many respects the pretensions of the Company, at the same time expressed a strong conviction of the importance of establishing at an early date a regular government in the territories intervening between Canada and British Columbia, and said that they would have opened negotiations with the Company for the extinction of their claims were it not for the prospect of a speedy confederation of the Provinces. The Canadian Ministers had thought it improper to enter upon negotiations which could only be completed and fulfilled by the confederate government and legislature, but had no doubt that these would feel it to be one of their first duties to open negotiations with the Hudson's Bay Company for the transfer of their claims to the territory. The Minute of Council then invited the aid of Her Majesty's Government in discountenancing and preventing any such sales of any portion of the territory as were contemplated by the Hudson's Bay Company.

All this while the question of the reorganisation of the fur trade, the abrogation of the old Deed Poll of 1821, and the remuneration of the officers, continued to drag along. The point was: what compensation would they receive? What would the reorganised company consider equitable?

Governor Dallas suggested that the value of a retired interest should be fixed and a money compensation paid to each officer on agreeing to the abrogation of the Deed Poll. The value of an eighty-fifth share, based on the average of the previous thirteen outfits, was estimated at £408, at which rate a Chief Factor's retired interest would amount to £3,264, and a Chief Trader's to £1,632. To these sums should be added a customary year's furlough before retiring. On such a scale of commutation, it would cost

the company £114,599. To counterbalance this expense, Dallas proposed a new scale of salaries. Hitherto the average pay of officers in the service was, to the Governor-in-Chief, £2,000; 16 Chief Factors, £12,000; 35 Chief Traders, £14,000; which, with £10,000 to the Clerks, brought the total officers' pay roll to £38,000. He planned to reduce this by more than one-third, thus: Governor-in-Chief, £2,000; Lieut.-Governor, £1,250; 4 Councillors, at £800, £3,200; 25 Chief Traders, at £300, £7,500; 100 Clerks, at various salaries, £10,000; Total, £23,950.

The Company had sought the opinion of Sir Hugh Cairns, who, on a superficial examination, had taken a mere *ex parte* view of the case. Consequently, when, on July 1st, 1865, the Northern Council had met at Norway House, the members agreed to put their protest in the form of a letter to Acting-Governor William Mactavish. The Governor and Committee, they declared, had expressed themselves as desirous of effecting a reasonable adjustment, but "something more was wanted":

> The perusal of the legal opinion of Sir Hugh Cairns, which has been submitted to us, has created a feeling of distrust in our minds, for it is very evident to us that the instructions to counsel in laying the case before him are one-sided, and betray a strong inclination to deprive us of all our privileges on points of the Deed Poll, which never before have been questioned, and which usage has continued to us.
>
> We again respectfully submit that we earnestly require the Deed Poll to be revised, errors corrected, the purport of the clause referring to the Fenchurch Street premises followed in accordance with the opinion of a valued accountant, and the vacancies among the Chief Factors and Chief Traders created by death or retirement filled up immediately and not left to an expedient time.
>
> We further desire that legal opinion be taken anew on the existing Deed Poll, the solicitor drawing up the instructions to counsel having first acquired a correct insight into the reading of it, which usage and equity confirm, and we think that you are best able to show how it has been understood among us.
>
> In addition, we think we are claiming only what is due to us in desiring that the interest annually debited the trade on the balance

of paper currency in circulation at Red River be written off, and said balance of currency be considered merely as an outstanding account from year to year.

We feel that the increased allowances to the Governor and Board of Directors on the creation of a new office of Advisor in the House at a cost of £1,500 per annum go a great way to crippling their Honours' power of liberality to us, who have borne the burden of the business and devoted the energy of our lives to the trade, and while we can see the proprietors are struggling under the effects of an expensive bargain with their predecessors, we deem it particularly hard that on us and our families its effect should fall.

We desire to receive a direct reply to the question, What disposition is to be made of the proceeds of the claim on the United States, if recovered?

In order to carry out the foregoing views, we beg to request that after the completion of your present tour you will undertake another journey to London so that you may in person receive ultimatum of their Honours and represent to them unless they make some further concessions the business cannot hang together.

This was signed by Chief Factors William J. Christie and James A. Grahame, and by Chief Traders Robert Campbell, Alexander Christie, James G. Stewart, Joseph Wilson, William McMurray, Charles F. ~~Griffair,~~ Thomas Taylor, Roderick Mackenzie and Samuel Mackenzie. It was not submitted to Chief Factor Smith or any in the Montreal department.

There was a proposal made some time in February, 1866, to Governor Head, by an American syndicate to purchase and settle portions of the Company's territory.

On this subject Mr. Smith wrote:

I can hardly believe that all these negotiations can be protracted without great damage to the Company. It is unsettling to the shareholders, and unsettling to the officers in North America and the people dwelling on the Company's lands. Sir Edmund has done everything in his power to induce either the Imperial or the Canadian Parliament to act. I myself should regret to see McEwen's party acquire any considerable portion of the territory, as long as there is a prospect of Canada stepping in, but it is unfair to ask the Company to continue the option indefinitely.

Summoned to Montreal

The following winter and spring (1867), Chief Factor Smith and his family spent at Mingan in the course of a round of official visits to the posts of the North Shore or the Canadian Labrador, for by this time the advantage of bringing Mingan, Seven Islands, and Bersimis within his charge had become manifest to the London Board, although the actual inclusion of the two posts last named within the Labrador district did not take place until 1868.

While Mr. Smith was still at Mingan the British North America Act went into operation, and Lord Monck, as Governor-General, proclaimed the birth of the Dominion of Canada. All that day the Union Jack fluttered from the summit of the Mingan flagstaff.

With the death of the Company's Governor, Sir Edmund Head, and the choice of his successor in the person of Sir Stafford Northcote, in 1867, numerous changes in the Company's internal organisation occurred.

In the following year Chief Factor Smith received instructions to winter at Montreal, with a view to familiarise himself with the work of the head-quarters office there. Meanwhile, it was proposed to throw the Esquimaux Bay and Ungava district into the Montreal department. Before Christmas, 1868, Mr. Smith was summoned to confer with the directors in the matter. By the middle of January he had engaged his passage on the steamer *Moravian,* sailing from Portland.

The result of this visit may be stated briefly. Mr. Smith was formally appointed to the charge of the Montreal department, incorporating therewith the Labrador district, and authorised to make the necessary disposition of officers, clerks and servants as circumstances demanded.

In Montreal Mr. Smith already had established important commercial relations. As he testified some years later in a speech to Red River Convention, January 25th, 1870 :

Shortly before leaving Canada, I myself was in business connection with such men as Mr. Hugh Allan; Mr. A. Allan, of the steamboat line; Mr. King, President of the Bank of Montreal; Mr. Redpath, the owner of one of the most extensive establishments in Canada; and other men of note there. Our object was to get up a Rolling Stock Company. In the first instance we had, I think, a contract for some 500 cars. And some fine day I hope that the townsmen of Winnipeg will see some of these cars making their way across the prairie. I hope you will see them coming laden with the manufactures of Canada, and returning laden with the surplus products of this country.

Though I have some connection with the Hudson's Bay Company, I may also say that I have been largely connected with public enterprises. I have had a considerable connection in a large woollen mill in Cornwall. Some of their blankets have already come in here, and no doubt many more will come in, if you find them better and cheaper than others. I hope yet to see men come in here, establish such manufactures, use up your wool, and circulate more money in the place. This they will do, no doubt, as soon as they will find it to their advantage.

At the close of the previous summer the Chief Factor had bade farewell to Esquimaux Bay, where he had spent twenty industrious years.

"People speak of the solitude of Labrador," he used to say afterwards. "It wasn't a solitude for me. I knew everybody there, from the oldest white traders and fishermen to the youngest Indian hunters and Esquimaux, and even their dogs. I knew every turn in the coast line and bend in the river, and every natural object had an interest for me. As for *ennui,* I can honestly say I did not know the meaning of the term. Time never hung heavily on my hands: I was always busy, and when I had no actual and definite task, I was planning."

We are not without testimony as to how the Chief Factor was regarded on the eve of his departure. In a letter to a friend, Captain Nathan Norman wrote:

I spent an hour with Chief Factor Smith last evening. He says he will probably never spend a winter here again, and I should not be surprised if he were to give up Labrador altogether. He is a most remarkable man, and the wonder is the Company has managed

to keep him up here so long. He said if the whole of Labrador were organised on a proper basis and under one control it would prove to be a prosperous and profitable country in spite of the drawbacks of the climate. He believes there are minerals here which will some day astonish the world.

One of Chief Factor Smith's clerks, Mr. James Wilson, has left the following on record:

"Mr. Smith always was very courteous and very frugal. He never lost his temper. Once, at North-West River, an old employee, named Irvine, was nailing down casks. Mr. Smith came along and said: 'You are putting too many nails in those casks. You mustn't put so many nails.' The man lost his temper. 'I've always put as many nails. I've been twenty years here. If you know better than I do,' said he, throwing down his tools, 'I'd better go.'

"'No,' replied Mr. Smith calmly; 'just put fewer nails.'

"As the man continued to grumble, the bourgeois requested him to meet him at the fort at a certain hour. At the time appointed, he went and listened to a stern lecture on his disobedience and insubordination for half an hour. He was brought to reason and remorse.

"'And now,' said Mr. Smith, shaking hands, 'we'd better step this way.' The man thought he was going to be discharged. A door was opened. 'Mrs. Smith is waiting for us. She would like to offer you a little refreshment before you go.' So they adjourned to the sitting-room, where cake and wine was on a table, and he was cordially entertained. 'We'll just forget all about it,' said the Chief Factor, good humouredly.

"The man was completely won, and thereafter became Donald A. Smith's friend and champion."

Chief Factor Smith's departure was a great blow to Labrador. Had he remained a few years more, he might have witnessed the establishment of great markets with the command of capital, and the lamentable waste which Dr. Grenfell deplores to-day would not exist.

"There is, as yet," writes Dr. Grenfell, "no cold storage to improve the value of exports. All offal of cod and all coarse fish are wasted. Capelin and herrings are put to no commercial value. Our innumerable berries rot where they grow. There has been no attempt whatever at the adaptation of plants or animals. Immense water powers and vast pulp lands are yet entirely undeveloped. Our coast is poorly lighted and charted; yachts are practically unable to visit us. Nothing is done with fresh-water pearls, mussels, kelp, and other possible sources of revenue."

But it were too much, perhaps, to expect that the subject of this memoir should devote exclusively to poor, bleak, remote Labrador those talents and that industry meant for the benefit of mankind at large.

CHAPTER VIII

TROUBLE IN THE NORTH-WEST (1869)

THE annals of the British Empire are full of examples of political blundering. The transfer of Rupert's Land and the North-West Territory to the Dominion of Canada, if not a classic instance, has, at any rate, some distinctive and entertaining features of its own.

Let us begin the story at the beginning, first remarking that on June 1st, 1869, Chief Factor E. M. Hopkins formally retired, and Mr. Smith succeeded him in the Montreal office of the Hudson's Bay Company.

The Dominion of Canada had been in existence all but two years. But, as yet, its western boundaries did not extend beyond Ontario. Many problems confronted the statesmen at the head of affairs. There was by no means that unity amongst the Provinces which was desirable; there was even disaffection in the east to be overcome; yet there was a party in the Cabinet, and in the country, which was for pressing on to the west without delay, and for carrying the young nation to the shores of the Pacific.

Whatever there then was of untimeliness, of tactlessness, of fanaticism even, in the counsels of these men, history proves them to have been in the right. They were right in urging that there should be no delay. They were right in declaring that fields for enterprise would shortly be necessary, and that to encourage and maintain the growing mercantile, manufacturing, and shipping interests of Canada a large increase in her agricultural

population was necessary. They overlooked the border and saw the example of the neighbouring republic. The rapid development and settlement of the Western States constituted the greatest factor in the success of the American Union, but they maintained that until it comprehended the whole territory from the Atlantic across the continent to the Pacific, it would not be complete.

Already, in the British North America Act, provision had been made for the extension of the Dominion. "It shall be lawful"—so ran the article—"for the Queen, by and with the advice of Her Majesty's Most Honourable Privy Council, on an address from the Houses of Parliament of Canada, to admit Rupert's Land and the North-West Territory, or either of them, into the Union, on such terms and conditions in each case as are in the addresses expressed, and as the Queen thinks fit to approve, subject to the provisions of this Act."

Before the close of 1867, resolutions had been passed by the Canadian Parliament that the North-West Territory should be transferred from Imperial to Canadian authority; "but," declared the Hon. William McDougall in his speech supporting the resolutions, "if the Hudson's Bay Company make any claim to any portion of the soil occupied by their servants, they must come into the courts to make good their claim, and will be accorded the right, if the decision is adverse to them, of appeal to the Privy Council."

It was hardly likely that the Company would consent to the transfer of the territory until its demands had first been settled, more especially as Canada had virtually undertaken to purchase its rights. The Company appealed to the Duke of Buckingham, the new Secretary of State for the Colonies. He at once forwarded a dispatch to the Governor-General, Lord Monck, informing him that the claims of the Company would have to be settled before any transfer of its territory could be effected, adding that a

Bill, based on the propositions of the Company, would be submitted to the Imperial Parliament.[1]

Sir John A. Macdonald and his colleagues were fully aware of the difficulties in their path, and reluctant at this juncture to embark on any new enterprise. "I am disclosing no secret of the Council Room," afterwards wrote McDougall to Joseph Howe, "when I inform you that in September, 1868, except Mr. Tilley and myself, every member of the Government was either indifferent or hostile to the acquisition of the North-West Territories."

When it was discovered that a ministerial crisis, respecting the route of the intercolonial railway, could only be avoided by securing the transfer of these territories to the Dominion, the Ministry agreed to act. A deputation was appointed to proceed to England with full power to close negotiations for the purchase of one-third of the North American continent. This deputation consisted of Sir George Etienne Cartier and the Hon. William McDougall. The deputation arrived in London in October, 1868, and at once entered into negotiations with the Company.

At the outset, the latter proposed to relinquish its rights of government and claims to the territory, reserving a royalty interest in the lands and mines, with certain reservations for hunting and trading purposes. Soon after the accession of Earl Granville to office, an agreement was reached, and arrangements for the transfer were concluded on March 9th, 1869.

[1] "With regard to the Hudson's Bay matter," wrote Sir George Cartier to Mr. Watkin under date of February 15th, 1868, "not the least doubt that the speech of John A. (Macdonald) was very uncalled-for and injudicious. He had no business to make such a speech, and I told him so at the time—that he ought not to have made it. However, you must not attach too much importance to that speech. I myself, and several of my colleagues, and John A. himself, have no intention to commit any spoliation; and for myself in particular, I can say to you that I will never consent to be a party to a measure or any thing intended to be an act of spoliation of the Hudson's Bay's rights and privileges."

In the speech in question Sir John had alluded to the "Hudson's Bay bugbear of a claim."

By this agreement the Hudson's Bay Company consented to receive £300,000 sterling on the surrender of their rights to the Imperial Government, the latter undertaking, within one month from such transfer, to retransfer the same to Canada. The Company retained certain reservations of land in the vicinity of their forts and trading posts, and were to have two sections in each surveyed township, or about one-twentieth of the whole. The Imperial Government agreed to guarantee a loan of £300,000 sterling to pay the Hudson's Bay Company, and the Canadian Government undertook to respect the rights of the Indians and half-breeds in the territory transferred.

So far all was well. In May, 1864, Governor Dallas had resigned office at Red River and gone to England. His successor, Chief Factor William Mactavish, who had spent his life in the Company's service, was generally liked and respected by all the people.

There was no idea of reviving the office of Governor-in-Chief of Rupert's Land. Mactavish was Governor of Assiniboia and Acting-Governor of the northern licensed territory. The whole of the Eastern department had thus been dissociated from his charge, and of this, as we have seen, Chief Factor Donald A. Smith had latterly been placed in control, with the title of General Manager. But, as I shall show presently, the real character of this arrangement was not generally understood.

In 1869 the population of the district of Assiniboia (or, as it was popularly called, the Red River Settlement) was between twelve and thirteen thousand souls. Of these, about one-half were French half-breeds, chiefly engaged in hunting, trapping, trading, and freighting. They were the most restless of the elements under the proposed change of administration; because of the restrictions placed upon them, they had never been very strongly attached to the Company, yet they were now far more disposed to remain under its sway than be dominated by English-speaking

Canadians who, with them, enjoyed far less popularity than the citizens of the neighbouring republic.

The village of Winnipeg, in the vicinity of Upper Fort Garry, was growing rapidly, and already contained eight stores for trading with the settlers and outfitting the half-breeds for the Indian trade. Occasionally, when the fur traders and hunters arrived from the interior, the vicinity represented a most animated appearance. Settlements had spread along the banks of the Red and Assiniboine Rivers, and there were many signs of comfort and prosperity. The settlers, as a rule, were peaceful and law-abiding; the disturbances which occurred from time to time arose chiefly from the acts of a few men, and were not countenanced by the community at large.

At St. Boniface, on the opposite side of the Red River, was situated the cathedral and the residence of the Roman Catholic bishop of the diocese. Monseigneur Alexandre Taché was a prelate of unusual sagacity, ability, and enlightenment, and exerted a special influence upon his co-religionists throughout the whole of Rupert's Land and the far north. The most cordial relations subsisted between Bishop Taché and Governor Mactavish and the other Hudson's Bay officials. But it must be borne in mind that, for reasons, some already manifest and others about to be described, the Company's authority had latterly been somewhat weakened in the country.

There were many persons throughout Canada who credited the existence of a strong desire on the part of the people and clergy of Quebec to make Assiniboia a French province. For fully two hundred years and more the French missionaries and trappers had traversed the North-West in every direction, from the Great Lakes to the Rocky Mountains, and doubtless beyond; and their acquaintance with the resources and possibilities of that territory was only equalled by that of the Hudson's Bay fur traders. These latter were never inclined to reveal their knowledge.

Even in 1869 there was already a redundant French population in Quebec seeking an outlet which was subsequently found in the New England States. The time, in fact, was ripe for a large immigration from Quebec to Assiniboia, similar to that movement which has recently altered the racial character of the former English-speaking eastern townships of Quebec.

The Red River settlers, French and English, had at last begun to communicate freely with the outside world. It must be remembered that, prior to 1853, the postal service was represented by the semi-annual packets of the Company, one in summer from York Factory, and the other in winter overland from Canada. In that year the monthly mail service was organised from Fort Garry to Fort Ripley, where it connected with the American postal system. A few years later, the American Government having established the bi-weekly mail to Pembina, a post situated on the boundary line, the Red River authorities took advantage of its facilities.

A more important step was in the direction of freedom of trade. In spite of every discouragement, Red River traders had managed to conduct business with Americans instead of depending entirely on England, via York Factory and Hudson's Bay. Seeing the impossibility of preventing it, the Company decided to profit by the transportation by water of supplies from St. Paul, in Minnesota. This was the beginning of that great line of communication with which Donald A. Smith was to be connected.

The first steamer proved at once so profitable that, in 1861, a second steamer was placed on the Red River to ply between Fort Abercrombie, in Minnesota, and Fort Garry. In the following year the *International* appeared, and was operated almost exclusively for the use of the Company. As its agent at St. Paul, the Company appointed Mr. Norman W. Kittson, afterwards one of Mr. Smith's closest friends and railway colleagues.

Louis Riel

We have thus glanced briefly at the prevalent conditions and character of the settlement in Assiniboia in the summer of 1869. There were disturbing factors in the life of the community. The protracted negotiations with the British and Canadian Governments increased the unrest in men's minds and added to the clouds already visible on the horizon.

Chief among the disturbing factors on the one hand was the so-called "Canadian" party, led by a certain obstreperous Dr. John Schultz, a Titan in stature and energy. There was also the "American" or "Annexationist Party," whose spokesman was one Robinson, with the *farouche,* deformed figure of "Colonel" Enos Stutsman, and "General" Malmros, the American consul, lurking in the background. There was a Red River Republican party, and there, amongst the other plotters and recalcitrants, was the unspeakable W. B. O'Donohoe, an unfrocked Fenian priest.

But there were also two other coteries or elements whose feelings were being slowly exasperated. One of these was composed of the officers of the fur trade (not merely at Fort Garry or in Assiniboia, but throughout the whole of Rupert's Land), and the other of the half-breeds, Métis or *Bois-brules,* led by a young man, partially educated, of fiery and fanatical nature, in whose veins flowed a few drops of Indian blood. His name was Louis Riel.

At an early age Riel had attracted the attention of Bishop Taché, who found him at the small college in St. Boniface earnestly studying Latin. In 1858 the Bishop obtained admission for the boy in the College of Montreal, where he was educated at the expense of a pious lady, Madame Masson, and it was believed he would take holy orders. Years later, in 1867, the Bishop again saw Riel in Montreal.

He told him that, now that he had secured an education for him, he must begin to look out for himself, and en-

deavour to gain an honest living. Riel then went to the United States, and remained there until he returned to his mother in the Red River settlement, in the autumn of 1868, when he got employment as a "freighter" on the plains.

"Riel," wrote Mr. Smith in a letter, "may have his faults and weaknesses, but he is decidedly a man out of the common. In the first place, his appearance is striking; he is swarthy, with a large head, a fine brow, and a piercing eye. His manner is very restless, and his assumption of dignity and coolness is constantly interrupted by explosions of temper, which as quickly subside again. He seems fairly well educated, and on the whole strikes me as a remarkable but an ill-balanced man."

In the latter part of June of this fateful year, when it was expected the transfer to Canada would take place on October 1st, Sir John Macdonald proposed that at least twenty surveyors should be sent immediately to the North-West to lay out townships for settlement. "I strongly objected," wrote McDougall afterwards, "to the proposition, and gave my reasons. It was urged that it was a good opportunity to gratify 'our friends' who wanted employment. I pointed out the danger of such precipitation, the absence of any necessity for the survey of so many townships immediately, and the fact that we had no authority until after the transfer to make surveys at all. You and your then colleagues will remember the warmth of the debate, and that the result was a telegram to Earl Granville asking him to obtain from the Hudson's Bay Company permission to begin the survey of townships previous to the formal transfer. In two or three days an answer came from the Colonial Secretary that the company had consented."[1]

"The Premier was ill," continued McDougall, who at that time was Canadian Minister of Public Works, "and did not attend Council for some days. His proposition to

[1] Letter to Hon. Joseph Howe.

survey twenty townships at once was taken up in his absence, and you [i.e. Howe, Cartier, and the rest of the Ministry] all agreed, without a dissentient voice, that my plan was preferable, viz. : To employ an able and experienced surveyor, with a small staff; to send him out to examine the country and report a plan of survey adapted to its topographical peculiarities; to find out the views of the land-owners, and the position of surveys and titles already made in Red River settlement; and, if he found it expedient, to begin operations at Oak Point, a place some thirty miles from Fort Garry, on the Government road between Red River and Lake of the Woods. In consequence of the peculiar views of the Premier, I was unwilling to proceed without another discussion with him and a formal decision of the Government, but all present on the occasion, and you among them, authorised me to adopt the course I had indicated, and to proceed departmentally. That very afternoon I telegraphed Colonel Dennis, a gentleman whose professional skill and energetic character I knew would be everywhere admitted, and offered him the position of superintendent of the work. He promptly visited Ottawa, received his instructions from me, conferred with the other Ministers, and proceeded to the North-West."

Now, although the Manitoba half-breeds were in a sulky, suspicious humour, threatening trouble, nothing was done to placate them or even to consider their susceptibilities. A surveyor named Snow, with his staff, had already gone ahead under McDougall's orders to survey a route recommended by the engineer, S. J. Dawson, notwithstanding the fact that Canada had as yet no legal right or title in the territory. In July, 1868, came Colonel Dennis to Red River to begin laying out townships, and making a general survey of the country. It is only fair to Dennis to state that, after consulting the Crown Lands Department, he submitted a memorandum on the subject, in which he intimated that there would probably be objection on the part of the

half-breeds to any survey until their claims had been investigated and settled by the Dominion Government. Unhappily, no attention was paid to this warning; the Ministry issued an order for the surveys to proceed. Colonel Dennis accordingly went to work to carry out his instructions.

While this was happening in the North-West, all the preliminaries of the transfer had been settled on the other side of the Atlantic early in August, 1869, save payment of the stipulated sum of £300,000. Lord Granville wrote thus to Canada's newly appointed Governor-General:

DOWNING STREET,
August 11, 1869.

SIR JOHN YOUNG.

SIR,—With reference to my despatch of the 22nd July, I have the honour to inform you that the Hudson's Bay Company have altered the draft deed of surrender, so as to make it conform with the terms in the draft Order in Council, and that I have approved of the draft as altered.

I transmit here for your information a copy of the draft Deed of Surrender, and also of the Rupert's Land Loan Guarantee Bill, which has just received Her Majesty's assent and become law.

I shall be glad to learn from you at your earliest convenience whether any arrangement has been made for the payment of the £300,000, as this is the only point now remaining to be settled before the Order in Council can be issued.—I have, etc.,

GRANVILLE.

On September 20th Sir John Macdonald issued authority for the payment of the purchase money forthwith out of the funds in the hands of the Hon. John Rose, the Canadian agent in London. The Imperial Government, as well as the Company, were seemingly anxious that there should not be any delay in making the transfer at the stipulated time. On September 25th, Sir Curtis Lampson, Deputy-Governor of the Hudson's Bay Company, wrote as follows:

MY DEAR MR. MCDOUGALL, — I received here yesterday your kind favour of the 7th inst. I was glad to hear that you had con-

sented to take charge of Rupert's Land for a time. We have received notice from the Colonial Department, that the transfer will take place on 1st of December, in accordance with the wishes expressed by the Canadian Government.

Perhaps Mr. Mactavish's action with reference to the settlers at Muskrat Creek has been misrepresented. Your letter with the enclosure shall go before our Board when we meet in October, and you shall have all the information in our possession as to the arrangements between Lord Selkirk and the Indians. You may rest satisfied that everything will be done in the power of the Hudson's Bay Company to aid you in the management of the Indians. Our interests are identical, and our views and wishes will be made known to all our agents in the Hudson's Bay Territory.—Very sincerely yours,

C. M. LAMPSON.

This letter, sent under cover to Governor Mactavish, at Fort Garry, did not reach McDougall until November 20th, when it was forwarded from Fort Garry. The reason for the delay will soon become apparent.

As we shall also see, everybody was written to, everybody was complimented, everybody was placated, except poor Mr. Mactavish and the little army of "wintering partners" in the country.

The "Canadian party" at Red River looked upon Colonel Dennis as a necessary instrument in the attainment of their cherished hopes. He would pull the chestnuts out of the fire for them. So (and all testimony is lucid and convincing on this point) an orgy of land-grabbing now set in. Absurd as it may seem to a philosopher, monstrous as it has appeared to many social reformers, there is no species of human cupidity so contagious. "Carpet-baggers" from Britain, Canada and America began to arrive and cast their eyes about for the fairest and most convenient portions of the territory where they might "stake a claim," avoiding only what was the actual property of the old settlers. Many of these land-hungry strangers were suspiciously conversant with the methods by which land is appropriated by American speculating pioneers. They cut a furrow around a parcel of land with a plough, and then drove stakes at intervals

in the ground inscribed with the claimant's name. Hundreds of acres were "staked off" in this manner on the site of the present city of Winnipeg. Schultz, the leader of the Canadian party, was by no means backward in zeal and acquisitiveness. Indeed, so large a tract was embraced by his furrow and indicated by his stakes that, had his expectations been realised, it was said, he "would have died one of the wealthiest landed proprietors in the Dominion of Canada!"

No wonder the Company's officers, the old settlers and natives, as well as the half-breeds, viewed these high-handed proceedings with dismay. If the land did not belong in fee simple to the Hudson's Bay Company, if it was to be transferred to Canadian "carpet-baggers," and their own prior claims to be utterly set at naught, would they have been human if they had not resented the whole proceeding as unjust and intolerable? If a title was to be granted to those individuals in the territory in which they had been born and bred, and many of their fathers before them, simple justice would seem to dictate that they should be given a prior claim. Yet, not only was such an equitable policy not contemplated, but the very manner in which the confiscation was begun was itself an offence.

Dennis soon became aware that his previous diagnosis of the temper of the people whose countryside he had invaded was sound. On August 21st, 1869, he reported to Ottawa:

> I find that a considerable degree of irritation exists among the native population in view of the surveys and settlements being made without the Indian title having first been extinguished. In connection therewith, I would reiterate to you my conviction, as expressed while at Ottawa, that no time should be lost. The necessity for prompt action is more apparent to me now than it seemed even then. . . . In the meantime, the French half-breeds, who constitute about one-fourth or one-fifth (say 3,000 souls) of the settlement are likely to prove a turbulent element. This class has gone so far as to threaten violence should surveys be attempted to be made.

Another Unheeded Warning

A week later he wrote again to Ottawa:

> I have again to remark the uneasy feeling which exists in the half-breed and Indian element, with regard to what they conceive to be premature action taken by the Government in proceeding to effect a survey of the lands without having extinguished the Indian title, and I beg permission to reiterate the conviction expressed on a former occasion that this must be the first question of importance dealt with by the Government.

To this, the amazing reply of the Government was: "Proceed with the surveys on the plan proposed."

The surveyors persisted: threatening crowds gathered about them. It only needed a spark to produce an explosion.

Here was a juncture for anyone with knowledge and authority and a sense of justice to step forward and explain to the people the benevolent intentions of the Canadian Government. The fears of one section at least could have been dissipated at a word. Their indignation could have been removed and their loyalty secured without a penny of expense. And all parties could have been assured that none would be cheated of his claims and his just rights. Had this been done, the insurrection at Red River would, in all probability, have perished at its birth.

True, the Hudson's Bay officers and ex-officers, the old settlers and the sons of settlers, the men who had borne the heat and burden of the day, who had suffered privations and toiled long in the wilderness that a parcel of London stockholders might wax fat—*they* would still have been aggrieved. But *they* would not have revolted. If ever a pacificator was to appear, the time was ripe. Absurd rumours flew from mouth to mouth amongst the French-speaking inhabitants. It was said and believed, for instance, "that plots of ground, where some of them had dwelt and reared families for fifty years, would be torn from their possession by the Government of Canada, and themselves cast adrift; their rights to the soil would be invaded, their houses taken from them, enormous taxes would be levied,

and the most absolute tyranny forced upon them. They would be bought and sold like slaves." With these notions in general currency, we cannot wonder at the popularity of the movement which was created to resist to the death Canadian coercion.

And then, lo and behold! a distinguished candidate for the rôle of pacificator appeared.

In August, the Hon. Joseph Howe, Secretary of State for the Provinces, came to Montreal and had an interview with Mr. Donald Alexander Smith. He expressed his intention to undertake a journey to Red River in order to see with his own eyes the conditions prevailing there.

A man of great parts was Joseph Howe—one of the most outstanding figures in contemporary Canadian history. His mind was cultivated, his understanding vigorous, and to these gifts was added a fluent and sonorous oratory. But he was secretly a pessimist about the North-West. "If you tell me," he said on one occasion, "that the Sahara is fertile and the Dead Sea capable of yielding magnificent trout, my mind is elastic enough to conceive the scientific possibilities, but I should reserve my time, my interest, and my money for more immediately practical matters."

Not alone was Howe amongst the statesmen of the party, or even amongst the residents of Rupert's Land itself, to discount the probability of that territory ever conferring any solid advantage upon the Dominion! Nevertheless, he felt it incumbent upon him, as a Minister and Secretary of State for the Provinces, to visit the distant territory which the Government, in a somewhat unorthodox and arbitrary fashion, was about to annex.

While Howe was travelling towards Red River, in England the negotiations between Government and the Company had reached their climax, and October 1st, 1869, was announced as the date on which the purchase money was to be paid to the Company and the transfer to Canada effected. To the Hon. William McDougall was awarded the

prize he sought; he was appointed Lieutenant-Governor of the North-West Territories, the appointment to take effect from and after the date on which such territories were transferred by Her Majesty to the Dominion. Howe addressed a letter to McDougall, instructing him to proceed with all convenient speed to Fort Garry to superintend the preliminary arrangements for the organisation of the territories, and report to the Government at Ottawa. He then accompanied his fellow-minister, travelling with him, to Thunder Bay, and then left him and went on with a friend to St. Paul. By the middle of September he was at Red River. He spent a fortnight there. The result of his observations was to convince him that an egregious blunder had been committed, and to cause him to regret that the Government had ever attempted to hasten matters in the North-West! He expressed to Governor Mactavish his regret at the turn affairs had taken. Mactavish was resentful at the action of the Canadian Government, but he made no secret of the fact that still greater was his resentment at the manner in which he and the other wintering partners had been treated by the Company.

Before casting blame upon the officers of the Hudson's Bay Company for not espousing the cause and defending the action of the Canadian Government, we must remember how the Government had ignored them. We must recall the manner, equally high-handed and unjust, with which these officers had been treated by the London Board. Could anyone with knowledge of human nature expect that they would feel any particular loyalty or respect for a newly constituted body of British and American speculators, who—having acquired all the ancient rights and possessions of the Hudson's Bay Company—now proceeded to deal with the wintering partners as if they were ordinary employees, without any claim upon the concern save for their dividends and pensions?

"The Hudson's Bay officials residing in the territory,"

wrote Colonel Garnet (afterwards Lord) Wolseley, "were loud-spoken in denouncing the bargain entered into by their directors in London; they said it injured them materially, without providing any compensation for the loss they were about to sustain; that they, the working bees of the hive, were to receive nothing, whilst the drones of stockholders in England were to get all the honey in the shape of the £300,000.

"The English-speaking farmers, although thoroughly loyal, and anxious for annexation to Canada, so as to be delivered from what many called the 'thraldom of the Hudson's Bay Company,' regarded the terms of the transfer in no favourable light. . . . They considered themselves slighted, and were sulky in consequence. They had no intention of giving themselves any trouble to aid a Government that had not only failed to consult or to consider their interests, but had ignored their existence altogether.

"With the exception, therefore, of the small handful of Canadian adventurers already alluded to, no one residing in the settlement in 1869 was pleased with the arrangements, and many were loud-spoken in denouncing them. Where such active elements of discontent existed, it may be easily imagined how simple it was to fan the smouldering embers into a flame of active rebellion."[1]

This puts the whole case in a nutshell.

What course should Howe have pursued? He was the representative of, and in a particular sense *was,* the Canadian Government. Had it been possible, he should have postponed the completion of the bargain and have advised his colleagues in Ottawa to meddle no further in the affairs of the North-West until the country was appeased, and all sections had become unanimous for inclusion within the Confederation. But was such a course possible? Whatever Howe's private feelings, it was now too late for him, as a politician, to take any arresting action. McDougall

[1] *Blackwood's Magazine*, 1871.

was at his heels—McDougall, the proud, the sensitive, with his *idée fixe,* hugging to his bosom his dream of glory.

We may smile at the spectacle now: but in sober truth William McDougall was of the stuff of which great national heroes have been made. But for the uncalculated chance of destiny, this earnest, ardent champion of a wider nationhood would to-day be acclaimed in history as the Father of the Canadian West, and his statue rise benignantly from the centre of its teeming metropolis.

What then did Howe do? McDougall could not now be recalled. He was at Howe's heels; there was no possibility of telegraphing to Ottawa. Clearly, therefore, in the circumstances, it was incumbent to prepare the way for him. To Sir John Macdonald he wrote as follows:

WINNIPEG, FORT GARRY,
October 16, 1869.

MY DEAR SIR JOHN,—I have been here a week, and shall leave for home in three or four days. I shall probably meet McDougall on the way, and will give him the benefit of my observations. For many reasons, which I will explain when we meet, my visit here has been opportune and useful. Any amount of absurd rumours were afloat when I came, and a good deal of strong prejudice has been excited. Some fools wanted to get up addresses, and have me speak at a public meeting.

This I declined; but by frank and courteous explanations to leading men who largely represent the resident population, I have cleared the air a good deal, and I have done my best to give McDougall a fair start. All will now depend on his tact, temper, and discretion. —Believe me, yours ever,

JOSEPH HOWE.

Who were the "fools" who pressed Howe to speak at a public meeting? Dr. Schultz and the leaders of the Canadian party? But, if Howe wisely declined to ally himself with Schultz, at least he might have addressed himself directly to the malcontents, to the settlers and pioneers and the ignorant half-breeds. He might surely have uttered a word of explanation and conciliation to the people about to come under the rule of his Government; he might indig-

nantly have repudiated the current suggestion that the inhabitants were being "bought and sold like so many cattle"; he might have declared the benevolent intentions of Canada and appeased the settlers by a promise of generous treatment in the matter of lands. Howe was an orator, and at the thunders of his eloquence the whole agitation might have died quietly away. What Howe did cannot, unhappily, be concealed. One has only to read the report made by Major James Wallace on his return to Pembina from Fort Garry:

Mr. Bannatyne (Postmaster and a member of Council at Winnipeg) stated to me on several occasions, between the 9th and 20th November, while I was at Fort Garry, that Mr. Howe told him that he (Howe) approved of the course of the half-breeds, and if they held out they would get all they wished for from the Canadian Government. That he (Howe) had held very little intercourse while there with that party calling itself the "Canadian Party," for he firmly believed that Schultz, Mair and Bown, with his "*Nor'-Wester*," had acted in a very unbecoming manner towards the half-breeds, and he only wondered how these men were tolerated in the settlement. And further, that when he took his place in Parliament he would certainly do his best for the half-breeds. Mr. Bannatyne put great stress upon the latter expression, and told me that Howe and the Lower Canadians would make a big fight against Upper Canadians not to have any coercion used in the settlement. Mr. Howe further told him that the settlement would prosper if left to govern itself.

Mr. Howe also told Mr. Bannatyne that Mr. McDougall was unpopular in Canada, and hinted at the probability that he would make himself so if allowed to govern Red River. Mr. McKenny (Sheriff) told me that Mr. Howe made himself very popular while at Red River, and he believed if they wanted a Canadian Governor there at all, they would have accepted him; but the time for Canada to rule their country was past, that their natural outlet was through the United States. That no Canadian Government could be established permanently in the settlement. Mr. McKenny also confirmed Bannatyne's statement that Mr. Howe told him he had no doubt of the success of the half-breeds if they were firm and held out.

Mr. McKenny also laid great weight on the action that Mr. Howe would take in the Canadian Parliament, assisted by Lower Canadians.

Attempts were subsequently made by Howe and certain of his friends to repudiate such testimony as this. But the fact of the man's predilections was too notorious to be explained away. There was even a certain avowed Republican in the settlement, Robert O'Lone, who derived comfort from Howe's words. To Major Wallace this man afterwards spoke highly of Howe, and said he was as much a Republican as he himself was, and that he knew he would not wish to force that settlement into subjection to Canada; in fact, that he was a very liberal-minded man. He also corroborated the statements, made by many others, that Howe, along with most of the Lower Canadian members, would range themselves in the Canadian Parliament on the side of the Red River people, and that, through his eloquence and with the precedent of Nova Scotia before them, he had no doubt but they would be left to themselves, for the concessions they would ask would not be granted by the Canadian Government. We have, however, Howe's own testimony as to his forebodings in a letter which he wrote on October 23rd to Mr. Edward O'Brien:

> My visit to Red River has utterly cured me of any lingering hope I may have had of a peaceable transfer. The only thing we can do now is to minimise the extent of the mischief. Trouble is bound to come either before or after, and if it were not for Mr. McDougall and the extent to which we have pledged ourselves, I would say let us keep our hands out of this Manitoba business into which we have been hurried and which promises to jeopardise our Government and the interests of Confederation. It will be hard to pull out now, but if we see a chance of it we must do it. This country is not necessary to us, and at this stage it will only be a drag upon our energies and resources.

Thus Howe returned with his worst fears confirmed. He had seen little or nothing to dispossess his mind of his previously formed opinion of the utter impracticability of converting Rupert's Land into a peaceful and profitable agricultural country. He had seen everything to convince him that the people of Red River would not accept what

almost amounted to forcible annexation by Canada without a remonstrance!

But not a hint of this at present ought to have been made public. It was necessary to let McDougall go in. After all, matters might turn out better than Howe expected. On October 30th he reached St. Paul, having actually passed McDougall on the way.

Will it be believed—these two statesmen, personal friends and, until lately, official colleagues, passed each other on the prairie, hundreds of miles from civilisation, and—so great was the change that had come over Howe's mind and temper—they scarcely spoke to each other? Is it any wonder that McDougall was "surprised and pained"? He may well have felt misgivings about the task before him.

Howe, some months later, endeavoured to explain his singular conduct, and avowed he had discovered the grave blunder which had been made in leaving the Company's officers out of the bargain.

"These men [the Hudson's Bay Company officers]," he stated, "have large interests in the territory and in the property of the Company, and there was a feeling of dissatisfaction among them. I have every reason to believe that there was a feeling of great uneasiness among the resident employees of the Hudson's Bay Company, or among a very large portion of them, and I believe that they thought the directors and managers in London, to whom the £300,000 was to be given, would divide it among themselves exclusively, which they feared would work great wrong to them, for some of the men—I am not prepared to say how many—believed that they had fair and just claims to a portion of the purchase money. . . .

"I must say that Governor Mactavish met me in the most friendly way, and placed in my hands the records of the old Council of that country, and these I studied for two days. I procured and brought home for the use of the Minister of Justice a copy of the laws as they exist in that

territory, that the Government might know the laws to which the people were accustomed. I also obtained a list of names of old councillors, so that the Government might know in making appointments how to select men of experience in whom confidence had been reposed already. I discharged my trust faithfully and honourably, and did all any man could to quiet the difficulties.

"I met McDougall in the open prairie, when a cold north-east wind was blowing. Fortunately, I was travelling with the wind on my back, but the honourable member for North Lanark had the wind in his face; as, with his family of children, he travelled he had to face the storm. If the honourable gentlemen had been on the open prairie that bitter morning I think they would not have been exceedingly anxious to hold communication with anyone; and when there were women and children concerned it would have been barbarous to have stopped the cavalcade. Therefore, we merely exchanged a few greetings and passed on. Now, looking back at all that I have done, I am not conscious that we could have made it much better if we had stopped for an hour or two and held consultation. I could merely have made a few general observations about the rumours I had heard, and the last I knew was that a council was to be summoned to prepare an address of welcome to Mr. McDougall on his arrival. Therefore, I passed on after giving him (McDougall) a hint or two upon one or two topics which I thought it would be better for him avoid."

"Howe knew," said McDougall long afterwards, "that he had done me an ill-turn and was ashamed to meet me."

Nevertheless, on arrival at St. Paul he seems to have thought that something was required of him under the circumstances. He therefore penned the following:

St. Paul,
October 31, 1869.

My dear McDougall,—I got here yesterday at noon, and go east to-morrow morning. I was sorry not to have had an hour's

chat with you, but what I had to say lies so obviously on the surface that your own judgment will guide you correctly, even if it is unsaid.

I found a good deal of misapprehension and prejudice afloat, and did my best to dissipate it. Schultz, with a very indifferent private character, had been assuming an absurd position as the representative and confidential agent of the Canadian Government, and Mair had provoked a great deal of hostility by some foolish letters which he had published. I disclaimed any connection with either, and kept Schultz at arm's length. It would be a great mistake to patronise a little clique of persons at war with the more influential elements of society.

These are sufficiently mixed and heterogeneous to require delicate handling, but they must form the basis of any successful government, and if dealt with fairly, courteously, and justly, I have no doubt can be organised and utilised till the foundation is widened by immigration.

I hope that Mactavish, who is much respected, will take a seat in Council and give you cordial support.

The half-breeds are a peculiar people, like our fishermen and lumbermen, but they do a large amount of the rough work of the country which nobody else can do so well. I hope the priests will counsel them wisely, and that you may be able to draw in some of their leaders to co-operate in the business of Government.

With the English population there will be no difficulty, if we except two or three American traders who are annexationists.

The Indian question was not presented to me in any form, as I saw none of their chiefs, but they repudiate the idea of being held to the Company, and some form of treaty or arrangement may be necessary. Anything will be better than an Indian war at that distance from the centre.

You may rely upon our cordial co-operation. I have a keen insight into the difficulties before you, and will do my best to make your mission a success.—Believe me, yours truly, J. Howe.

Howe confessed that Schultz, "with a very indifferent private character, had been assuming an absurd position," and that he kept him at "arm's length." The truth is that, as a politician, he dared not interfere; he dared not repudiate Schultz and the Canadian party because of the weapon which such conduct on his part would have placed in the hands of the opposition, especially in Ontario. He felt constrained to let McDougall, Schultz and the others

INTERIOR OF FORT GARRY

As it was in the early days of the Canadian North West

(From an Old Print.)

EXTERIOR VIEW OF FORT GARRY

(From an Old Print.)

Governor Donald A. Smith
Hon: John H. McTavish Chief
Factor, and Later Lord Strathcona
for the C.P.R. transfer.

go their own way and himself say as little as possible about his visit to Red River.

On the day before Howe had written the foregoing letter, McDougall arrived at Pembina. This post, now known as Emerson, is situated on the Canadian side of the international boundary, about sixty miles south of Fort Garry.

Now, scarcely had the Secretary of State taken his departure from Red River when the half-breed leader, Louis Riel, with a handful of followers, marched southward to the border and placed a barrier across the road at Rivière Sale in order to prevent the entrance of the incoming Canadian Governor. At various public and private meetings, which were held among the French, Riel took a prominent part, the result being that three or four hundred men assembled at the aforesaid barrier with the avowed object of keeping McDougall out at all hazards. A council was formed, one John Bruce being made president and Louis Riel, secretary. The council chamber was at Rivière Sale, in the house of a priest named Ritchot. Furthermore, a messenger was sent to intercept Mr. McDougall with the following missive, warning him not to attempt to enter the settlement:

Monsieur,—Le Comité National des Métis de la Rivière Rouge, intime à Monsieur W. McDougall l'ordre de ne pas entrer sur le Territoire du Nord-Ouest sans un permission spéciale de ce comité.

Par Ordre du President,

John Bruce.

Daté à St. Norbert, Rivière Rouge,
Ce 21e jour d'octobre, 1869.

Louis Riel, *Secretaire.*

On the very day Howe arrived in St. Paul, Governor Mactavish forwarded the following letter to Governor-designate McDougall at Pembina:

October 30, 1869.

It is with much concern I have to say that among a certain portion of the half-breed population here there prevails a degree of excitement at the prospect of your arrival in the country, which seems to make it necessary that in coming into the settlement you should

use great circumspection, and it is for the purpose of pointing attention to that apparent necessity that I send you this communication.

For some weeks past rumours have been reaching me, through more or less reliable channels, of dissatisfaction among the French half-breeds with the recent arrangements; but believing, as I then did, that these feelings had no very deep root, I indulged in the hope that they might pass away. But in this respect I am deeply pained to say I have been disappointed, and that within the last few days the feeling of discontent has manifested itself in such a manner as to create serious apprehension for the result. After interfering with the surveying operations of Colonel Dennis, these people in considerable number have combined for the avowed purpose of stopping your entrance into the settlement, and with that view they have actually taken up permanent positions on the road by which, in the usual course of travel, you would advance.

Mactavish then went on to suggest three courses for meeting the difficulty which had arisen:

The first is that, there happily being among even the French half-breeds a considerable element of well-disposed persons, there should be carefully selected, from that section, a body of from twenty to thirty men who, mounted and armed, should proceed to Pembina and escort you entirely clear from the roads on which the malcontents are known to have taken up positions.

The second is, that of making a public call upon the whole loyal portion of the settlement to turn out in the cause of order, and to the number of say 300 unarmed, able-bodied men, if such a force could be mustered, proceed to Pembina and escort you into the settlement by the usual route, whether the malcontents remain upon it or not.

And the third is, that you should remain at Pembina and await the issue of conciliatory negotiations, with the view to procuring a peaceable dispersion of the malcontents.

Mr. McDougall's secretary, Mr. Provencher,[1] who had been dispatched to Fort Garry with a message to Governor Mactavish, was promptly stopped at the barrier by the French and turned back to Pembina. A Captain Cameron (Hon. Dr. Tupper's son-in-law), who accompanied McDougall's party in the capacity of military adviser, also

[1] A nephew of the first Bishop of Red River.

attempted during the next few days to gain entrance to the settlement; but he, too, was ejected, a guard of twenty-five or thirty armed men accompanying both officials to the boundary line.

The exploits of this same guard, commanded by a French half-breed named Lépine, were not yet over. They now had the audacity to conduct Mr. McDougall and party from the Hudson's Bay Company's post at Pembina, where they had taken refuge, into the adjacent American village of Pembina, warning them not to enter the Assiniboia settlement again. In the nick of time the surveyor, Colonel Dennis, appeared upon the scene, and by his exertions spared his discomfited chief from sleeping houseless that night on the prairie. At the farm of a certain La Rose, subject to much inconvenience, suffering many deprivations and exposed to the derision of vulgar frontiersmen, the party awaited the issue of events. On December 1st, at all events, reasoned McDougall, the act of transfer would go into effect and Riel and his followers would not dare defy the majesty of the law.

Days passed into weeks: the Hon. William McDougall was still at Pembina.

* * * * * *

When Donald Alexander Smith arrived in Montreal on his return from England, he found a mass of detail connected with his new office awaiting consideration. He plunged into this with his accustomed industry. But very shortly was he made aware that matters were in a parlous state in the North-West. Personal letters from Red River, as well as dispatches in the newspapers, told him that a serious state of affairs was developing in consequence of Colonel Dennis's surveying operations. True, Red River was a couple of thousand miles away and entirely outside the official scope of the general manager in Montreal. But, as he expressed it in a letter to a friend, one of the members of the Board:

"We in the east, as well as those in the far west, cannot shut our eyes to the fact that we are all of us, every factor, trader and clerk directly involved in this issue. The Company is a single body, and Red River lies at its heart. If Mr. Mactavish were enjoying good health and able to put forth all his vigour, the case would be far less serious, but from all accounts he finds it a double strain to cope with the situation."

Again, too, he suspected that the Governor of Rupert's Land was beginning to entertain a little jealousy towards himself. In his latter communications to Mr. Mactavish, the secretary of the London Office of the Hudson's Bay Company had made more than one allusion to Mr. Smith, as if intimating that the counsels of the Montreal manager might not be without utility. Moreover, it was already being rumoured that Chief Factor Smith was the destined chief of the fur trade. The natural irritability of an invalid was incensed at the suggestion. A letter, couched in the most guarded and respectful terms, which Mr. Smith addressed to the Governor, requiring information for the benefit of political inquirers in Canada, drew forth only a formal reply.

It has already been intimated in these pages that the whole situation of the Company's government and operations, and its relations to the people of Canada, had recently undergone a definite and almost a dramatic change. The causes were twofold. The first was the revolution within the Company itself, due to its acquisition in 1863 by the International Financial Society, a proceeding which filled the wintering partners with mingled resentment and alarm; the second was the impending "transfer" of Rupert's Land to Canada. One result of this latter measure would be to shift the centre of the Company's authority, influence and commercial activity from Fort Garry to Montreal. The Company having no diplomatic agent in Ottawa, its chief executive officer in that department would naturally be regarded as acting in that capacity.

As Simpson's Official Successor

In Sir George Simpson's time, nearly a decade before, the seat and centre of the Company's government was where the Governor happened for the nonce to reside. As this had latterly been Montreal (Lachine), many otherwise well-informed persons, even Sir John Macdonald himself, who frequently had occasion to consult the autocrat of the fur trade, took it for granted, before the Western troubles became acute, without inquiring very closely into Mr. Smith's credentials or antecedents, that he was Simpson's authentic official successor.

We may pause for a moment to remark upon the little that was known half a century ago of the operations and *personnel* of the great fur trading monopoly by the Canadian people at large. Notwithstanding the report of the Parliamentary Commission of 1857, despite the various petitions to the Legislature, and the continued agitation in Upper Canada and in the Red River Settlement itself, an air of mystery still enveloped the whole British North American fur trade. The newspapers of that day did little or nothing to enlighten the public, for the simple reason that they were ignorant themselves. The most absurd and extravagant legends were current. Both John MacLean and R. M. Ballantyne had written books which gave a true and even vivid picture of life in the Company's service from within; yet, strange as it may seem, these books were not read in Canada. The former author, indeed, although his narrative was actually written in Guelph, in the Province of Upper Canada, complained that he had never met anyone even in Toronto who had ever even heard of it!

To the popular imagination the officers of the fur trade dwelt during their active life within fortified stockades, either on the shore of Hudson's Bay or in the vast and desolate wilderness of the West, known on the map as Rupert's Land, to which forts hordes of painted savages, intimidated by a show of authority and a few pieces of ancient artillery, periodically brought their canoe cargoes of costly fur. In

exchange for this product of their skill as hunters and trappers the white traders doled out muskets, red and yellow blankets and capots, ammunition, strouds, axes, steel traps and tobacco, glass beads and various trumpery, commonly taking thereby for these an unfair advantage of the red man's folly, ignorance and helplessness. The ethics of this system of commerce, it may be added, aroused far less indignation than the fact of its being a chartered monopoly.

That there lay a large territory to the east in which the Hudson's Bay Company conducted these questionable operations was, if known at all, seldom considered. That a Hudson's Bay official could spend a lifetime, alternately keeping accounts, farming his glebe and superintending the packing of salmon on the coasts of Labrador, never entered into their calculations or their imaginations; nor did it occur to Donald Alexander Smith to enlighten them.

Silence concerning himself and his personal affairs was one of the most marked traits of his character. It did not arise from any guile or wilful intention to mislead; only, as he himself said, "It is no part of my duty to volunteer to correct any man's opinion or delusions unless it be in the general interest."

The foregoing being understood, it is entertaining to learn that of all Mr. Smith's early neighbours and acquaintances in Montreal the large majority believed him to hail direct from Rupert's Land. Not a few shared the belief of Hon. Thomas White, who informed Doctor Tupper that "a Mr. D. A. Smith has been sent out from England to manage the affairs of the Hudson's Bay Company at Montreal." But the legend which persisted down to his death was that Lord Strathcona had served somewhere in Rupert's Land, and that he had passed many years on the shores of Hudson's Bay.

CHAPTER IX

COMMISSIONER TO RED RIVER (1869)

WHEN Mr. Howe returned to Ottawa and explained the exact situation of affairs in Assiniboia, the full enormity of the blunder which had been committed dawned upon the Ministry. To have placated Governor Mactavish and the officers of the Hudson's Bay Company in the first instance, now appeared a course of the merest prudence. The Government had erroneously assumed that the interests of the London Board of the Company and its fur-trading officers were identical, when, as a matter of fact, the latter were smarting under a sense of injury but little alleviated by the too-manifest anxiety of the Board and shareholders to lay hands upon the £300,000 indemnity.

What Howe laid stress upon was: why had not William Mactavish been appointed Provisional Governor of Manitoba and the North-West Territories under the Canadian Government? The answer was that no one had thought of such a solution of the difficulty; and, secondly, that, so far as anything was known of Governor Mactavish, he was believed to be a loyal officer of the Company, devoted to his "employers" and accustomed implicitly to obey their orders. Moreover, he had certainly displayed little interest in the transaction.

"When," Howe stated subsequently, "Governor Mactavish visited Canada in June last, he was in communication with the Canadian Government, and he never intimated that he even had a suspicion of discontent existing; nor did he make any suggestions as to the best mode of effecting the proposed change with the assent of the inhabitants."

However, it was too late to consider Mactavish now. McDougall's account of the check he had received on the threshold of the territory confirmed all Howe's worst fears. To the Prime Minister fell the task of giving the baffled pro-consul a belated word of advice.

Sir John Macdonald wrote as follows:

> The point you must never forget now is that you are approaching a foreign country under the government of the Hudson's Bay Company. You are going there under the assumption that the Company's authorities assent to your entering upon their territory, and will protect you while there. You cannot force your way in. The case is precisely as if a Canadian going to New York should find that he would be opposed in entering Buffalo. He ought not to attempt to force his way past them, but should communicate with the United States authorities, leaving them to clear the way for his ingress and to protect him while within their bounds.
>
> It occurs to me that you should ascertain from Governor Mactavish the two leading half-breeds in the Territory, and inform them at once that you will take them into your council. This man Riel, who appears to be a moving spirit, is a clever fellow, and you should endeavour to retain him as an officer in your future police. If you do this promptly it will be a most convincing proof that you are not going to leave the half-breeds out of the law.

That was the best the Ministry could do—to wish McDougall "well through" with his all but hopeless adventure.

Daily the situation at Red River grew more acute; the opposition to Canada's assumption of sovereignty became systematic. As the paramount authority of the Hudson's Bay Company was now declared to have lapsed, the country became (so reasoned the half-breeds), *ipso facto*, a republic. On November 2nd Governor Mactavish thus concluded a letter to the London secretary of the Company:

> As I close this letter a party of one hundred of the malcontents have arrived and taken possession of Fort Garry under pretext of defending it, as from information in his possession Mr. Riel alleges it is in danger; guards are posted at each gate and parade the platforms. They give assurances that nothing will be touched and

nothing taken. For what provisions they require they offer to pay in the name of the Council of the Republic of the half-breeds.

About four hundred men continue on guard at St. Norbert. Outgoing and incoming mails are subjected to examination.

Enough ink has been spilt and strong language expended in efforts to prove the " complicity " of Mactavish and the Company's officials in this affair. Whatever may have been their antecedent disposition, their conduct was purely neutral and passive.

In a letter to McDougall the deposed Governor thus describes the event alluded to in the last quoted letter :

On the afternoon of Tuesday, the 2nd inst., a number of these daring people suddenly, and without the least intimation of their intention to make such a move, took possession of the gates of Fort Garry, where they placed themselves inside and outside the gates to the number, in all, of about 120, and where, night and day, they have constantly kept a pretty strong armed guard. On being asked what they meant by such a movement upon the fort they said their object was to protect it. " Protect it from what ? " they were asked. To this question they replied that they would not now specify the danger, but that they would do so hereafter, and obstinately took up the position they have since kept, in spite of all our protests and remonstrances at such a bold and high-handed proceeding. On coming into the fort they earnestly disclaimed all intention of injuring either person or property within it—and it must be allowed that in that respect they have kept their word.

We gain a further glimpse into the state of affairs through another letter from Mr. Mactavish to the Company's London secretary, Mr. W. G. Smith :

FORT GARRY, RED RIVER,
November 9, 1869.

SIR,—I have the honour to inform you that I yesterday heard from the Honourable William McDougall, in reply to my letter to him, copy of which was sent you with my letter of 2nd instant. A copy of his letters will be sent to you hereafter. In the meantime, I may say that Mr. McDougall does not seem to think I have acted very energetically in the matter, and reminds me very pointedly that at present I am responsible for the peace of the country.

He mentions that on receiving at Pembina an intimation that he was not to proceed to the Settlement, he had gone to the Company's establishment at Pembina, where he remained till he was ordered to withdraw within the American territory by an armed band of half-breed horsemen, and that, in consequence, he was, when he wrote me, camped on American territory, where he would remain till he heard from me the result of the efforts made here to open the road to the Settlement, or till I informed him that I considered his remaining longer at Pembina useless, which, in my opinion, is a point on which I cannot advise him, though I feel convinced that at present his entry into this settlement would lead to more serious difficulties than those to which we are at present exposed. Mr. McDougall refers to military and other arrangements, which arise out of the outrage to which he has been subjected.

Here matters remain much as they were. The Committee seem to be in constant session, but nothing is heard of them till their Secretary, Louis Riel, issues his manifestoes "by order." The idea of their organisation seems to have been taken from the place used to distribute relief supplies last winter, each Canadian parish having sent a delegate to form the Central Committee, and in an invitation issued this morning to the Protestant part of the community delegates are requested to meet the twelve members of the Committee already formed from the Roman Catholic parishes in Council. Here the same plan is adhered to, and the Protestant parishes are named, the object of the proposed meeting being, "since the invader is driven from our soil" to consult on the state of the country and the government to be adopted. The position is undoubtedly serious, and the case will require very careful handling, as any collision between parties will lead to the plain Indians being brought down on the Settlement next spring, as well as disturbances over all the plain districts, which will not be put down for years, long before which the whole business of the country will have been destroyed.—I have, etc.,

W. Mactavish.

Of course, matters could not go on in such fashion. It is all very well to stand aside while an engine is being prepared, and even directed, against a *corpus non grata,* but when it shows symptoms of operating blindly against a whole community, and thereby endangering life and limb, peace and property, something must be done to check it. The "Canadian party," prompted by McDougall, loudly called upon Mactavish, whom they addressed as "William

Mactavish, Esquire, Governor, Hudson's Bay Company, Fort Garry" (an ingenuous evasion of the titular difficulty) to issue a proclamation.

Anyone reading this appeal, which was largely signed by the citizens, must instantly perceive that it is exactly the sort of language which should have been addressed, and with far greater propriety, to the Hon. Joseph Howe on his late visit to the colony of Assiniboia. Moreover, Howe could have replied with fuller knowledge, clearer authority and more moral force than was possible to the now ill, harassed and superseded Mactavish.

Nevertheless, Mactavish granted the request. On the 16th he issued his proclamation. In the course of that document he showed how a number of unlawful acts had undoubtedly been committed by bodies of armed men. Among other acts enumerated were the following:

> A body of armed men have entered the Hudson's Bay Company's post at Pembina, where *certain gentlemen from Canada*[1] with their families were peaceably living, and under threats of violence have compelled them to quit the establishment at a season of the year when the rigours of winter were at hand, and forced them to retire within American territory.
>
> And in the last place, they have avowed it as their intention in all those unlawful proceedings to resist arrangements for the transfer of the government of this Country, which have been made under the sanction of the Imperial Parliament, and of virtually setting at defiance the royal authority, instead of adopting those lawful and constitutional means which, under the enlightened rule of Her Most Gracious Majesty our Queen, are sufficient for the ultimate attainment of every object that rests upon reason and justice; the persons who have engaged in committing those unlawful deeds have resorted to acts which directly tend to involve themselves in consequences of the gravest nature, and to bring upon the Colony and the country at large the evils of anarchy and the horrors of war.

In conclusion, the Governor of Assiniboia charged the aggressors to disperse and depart to their habitations under the penalties of the law he was powerless to enforce.

[1] The italics are mine.—B. W.

But a few days before Mactavish had exposed his real sentiments, as shown by the following passage in a letter, written at Fort Garry on November 4th, to his brother, Dugald Mactavish, in Montreal:

> I will not speak of our dignity, but it is more than flesh and blood can bear that we who have conducted the Government of this country for years with a view to the welfare and best interests of all classes of the inhabitants, should be summarily ejected from office, as if we were the commonest usurping scoundrels. Why should we be in such indecent haste to cut our own throats? What are the Canadians to us that we should fall into their arms the moment they approach us?

But, if Governor Mactavish's natural indignation escaped him in private, he was careful to avoid any acerbity in his official correspondence. By contrast, it must be confessed that McDougall's official correspondence is marked with an irascibility he was at no pains to conceal. Instead of addressing Mactavish (surely a fellow-sufferer!) in a friendly way, his letters were almost insulting. He harped constantly on the "secret disinclination" of the authorities at Fort Garry to "put down the rebellion."

On November 20th McDougall did not scruple to write as follows to Howe:

> The confirmed belief of every person I have seen, or whose testimony has reached me, is that the Hudson's Bay Company's employees, with scarcely an exception, are either actively or tacitly encouraging the insurrection. It was the prevalence of this belief that determined me to force the authorities into a public declaration of some kind that would dispel this illusion—if such it should prove to be—or compel them to show their hand as abettors of the insurrection. The "appeal" of the loyal inhabitants who had previously opened correspondence with me, was the last screw applied, and seems to have accomplished the purpose.

McDougall always insisted that the Company's officials, being aware beforehand of the insurgents' intention to take possession of the fort, did not take steps to prevent it. Afterwards he put this accusation in stronger and more offensive form. In a letter to Howe he said:

The rebels had found the gates open two weeks previously, were allowed to enter without protest, were accommodated with pemmican, brandy, tobacco, etc. *ad libitum*, by the obliging officers of the H. B. Company; and when asked, for form's sake, to walk out, declined with thanks! They laughed at the "protest" more boisterously, but not more heartily, than their willing captive, the unwilling protester, and then made themselves comfortable for the winter. Mr. Book-keeper Mactavish, no doubt, for form's sake also, charging the pemmican, brandy, etc., to the Canadian Government! As matters turned out, I frankly admit that my policy, in respect to Governor Mactavish and the Hudson's Bay Company's servants at Fort Garry, was not a success.[1]

Having laid hands upon Fort Garry, and confiscated such of its stores as his followers required, Riel's next exploit was to seize the furniture which Governor McDougall had purchased with the intention of furnishing Government House. This he appropriated, and sumptuously equipped the quarters of the Provisional Government in Fort Garry. Armed guards were stationed in the town of Winnipeg, and regularly patrolled the streets on the *qui vive* for any overt act hostile to Riel's authority.

After receiving the support of a convention held in Fort Garry of French and English half-breeds, Riel announced that until Mr. McDougall could produce an Act of Parliament securing to the inhabitants of Red River certain rights, which were expressly enumerated, he would be refused entry into the territory.[2]

Thus defied, McDougall found the fateful December 1st

[1] McDougall to Howe, *Red River Letters.*

[2] "It is to be noted that when the proposal to constitute a Provisiona Government was mooted in the Convention, a certain portion of the English deputies declined to take part in the proceedings until they had ascertained whether or no Governor Mactavish, the legal ruler of the territory, still considered himself vested with authority. A deputation was accordingly appointed to wait upon him in his sick chamber, for this gentleman had unfortunately during many previous weeks been suffering from the mortal disease of which he soon after died. Mactavish promptly informed them that he considered his jurisdiction had been abolished by the proclamation of McDougall, that he was a "dead man," and that they had therefore better construct a government of their own to maintain the peace of the country. Returning to their colleagues, the deputation announced to the convention what Governor Mactavish had said, and as a result Riel and his colleagues were nominated to their respective offices."—*Memorandum*, Lord Dufferin.

rapidly approaching and himself still at the lonely frontier post of Pembina. When he had left Ottawa he knew it was the fixed intention of the Government to issue the Queen's Proclamation on December 1st. No further instructions had reached him cancelling this arrangement; he now decided to act the great part altogether by himself, and in November, 1869, wrote thus to Howe:

SIR,—I have the honour to report that I am still at Pembina in the territory of the United States . . . and unable, in consequence of the continued occupation of the road by armed men, to proceed to Fort Garry.

I have further to report that I have not received any instruction for my guidance on and after the day of the transfer of the territory to Canada, nor any notice of the Order in Council, which has no doubt passed to effect it.

In these circumstances I am compelled to act upon the general powers and directions of my commission, and of the Acts of Parliament, Canadian and Imperial, which seem to bear upon the case.

I have accordingly prepared a Proclamation to be issued on the 1st day of December, reciting so much of the several Acts of Parliament as seemed necessary to disclose the requisite authority, and stating, by way of recital, the fact of surrender by the Hudson's Bay Company, acceptance by Her Majesty, and transfer to Canada, from and after the 1st December, A.D. 1869. Those facts I gather from the newspapers, from a private letter to me of the Deputy-Governor, of the Company, and my own knowledge before I left Ottawa, that the 1st December had been agreed upon as the date of the transfer.

In the present state of affairs in the settlement, it is of the utmost importance to announce the transfer in the most authentic and solemn manner possible, in order to give confidence, and the protection of legality, to the act of the loyal and well-disposed, and to put the malcontents and their American advisers and sympathisers publicly and technically in the wrong.

Authentically and solemnly, then, was the proclamation composed. Also, it occurred to McDougall to issue two others, in one of which he coolly deposed Governor Mactavish, and in the other appointed his friend, Colonel Dennis, Deputy-Governor. Some misgivings seem to have entered his head as to the legality of the procedure, and, in

a letter to the Secretary of State, he added naively, "I hope I am right in using the name of Her Majesty as prominently as I have done." As to this little informality, the Secretary of State, and even Her Majesty the Queen, had something to say later on.

Governor Mactavish, now lying very ill at Fort Garry ("nightly coughing much blood"), had not even been shown a copy of the Proclamation.

This formidable document in his pocket, Colonel Dennis dashed forward and occupied Lower Fort Garry (the "Stone Fort") with his followers. His arrival and occupation of this stronghold he heralded by a letter to Governor Mactavish (the amount of correspondence is bewildering!), mentioning the object of his occupation and enclosing a copy of his commission. On December 6th, "Lieutenant-Governor" Dennis issued a general "call to arms." He summoned "all loyal men to assist by every means in their power to restore public peace and order, and to restore the supremacy of the Queen in this part of Her Majesty's dominions."

This vigorous proceeding, followed by the drilling of enrolled Canadians and the haranguing of a body of Indians, naturally incited Riel to corresponding action. On the following evening the Métis leader assembled his men in front of Dr. Schultz's house, produced a copy of Colonel Dennis's commission which he read with every mark of disgust and contumely, then dashed to the ground and trampled beneath his feet. The dwelling of Schultz was surrounded, and he and his adherents, forty-five in all, were compelled to surrender.

Two days elapsed and Dennis wrote to his chief:

> You may rely upon it, these people are fully in possession for the winter, and say themselves that with the promises they have of Fenian and Filibusterers' support, they will be able to hold the country. I should not be surprised but that they may get many people here to join them too. I think they would do anything, many

of them, rather than offend the French now, as (they say) they see per " List of Rights " that the French ask nothing unreasonable.

Still at Pembina was Governor McDougall. His henchman, the valiant Dennis, having exhausted all his resources, which were, as we have seen, somewhat inadequate, now prepared to return thither, disguised—it is said—as a squaw.

After an absence of seventeen days, he returned to Pembina on December 15th, leaving behind him forty-five Canadians in jail and the whole countryside seething with excitement.

What Sir John Macdonald thought of this proceeding—this unsuccessful *coup d'état*—was divulged later. We know what consternation it caused in the Ministry.

To Mr. John Rose, agent for the Dominion in London, the Prime Minister wrote :

McDougall has made a most inglorious fiasco. Notwithstanding this, from mere impatience at his uncomfortable position at Pembina, and before he could possibly have received instructions in answer to his report of being stopped on the way, he chose to assume that on the 1st of December the surrender was made by the Company and the Order in Council passed by the Queen, and that the Order in Council was to appoint the day of its issue as the day of the Union. He issued a Proclamation under the Great Seal of the new Province, formally adding it to the Dominion. He then entered into a series of glorious intrigues, particulars of which I do not yet know, with the Swampy Indians near Red River, and with the Sioux Indians at Portage la Prairie, and sent the irrepressible Stoughton Dennis, in his capacity of " Conservator of the Peace," as he dubbed him, to surprise the Stone Fort.

By the way, I forgot to mention that Colonel Dennis, while at Fort Garry, consulted the Recorder, Black, as to the advisability of declaring martial law. Did you ever hear such frenzy ?

All this has been done in the direct teeth of instructions, and he has ingeniously contrived to humiliate himself and Canada, to arouse the hopes and pretensions of the insurgents, and to leave them in undisputed possession until next spring. He has, in fact, done all in his power to prevent the success of our emissaries, who were to arrive at Pembina on Christmas Day, and who would, I

think, if things had been kept quiet, have been able to reconcile matters without any difficulty. As it is now, it is more than doubtful that they will be allowed access to the territory or intercourse with the insurgents.[1]

To McDougall himself Howe wrote:

Your despatch, dated Pembina, 2nd December, and its enclosures A and B, reached this office on the 18th inst., and were promptly laid before the Governor-General and Council.

As it would appear from these documents that you have used the Queen's name without Her authority, attributed to Her Majesty acts which she has not yet performed, and organised an armed force within the territory of the Hudson's Bay Company without warrant or instruction, I am commanded to assure you that the grave occurrences which you report have occasioned here great anxiety.

The exertion of military force against the misguided people now in arms, even if under the sanction of the law, was not to be hastily risked, considering the fearful consequences which might ensue were the Indians, many of them but recently in contact with the white inhabitants of the neighbouring states, drawn into the conflict.

But, as the organisation and use of such a force by you was, under the circumstances, entirely illegal, the Governor-General and Council cannot disguise from you the weight of responsibility you have incurred.

Although at this date he did not fully realise the enormity of his offence, it had dawned upon the harassed Governor that he was being thrown over by his former colleagues. He determined, then, to play his last card with Riel. Accordingly he addressed to him the following polite effusion:

PEMBINA,
December 13, 1869.

To LOUIS RIEL, ESQ.

SIR,—I hear from the Hudson's Bay Post that you are expected to arrive there from Fort Garry to-night. I send this note to inform you that I am anxious to have a conversation with you before answering despatches which I have recently received from the Dominion Government.

I have not yet had any communication from you, or from anyone else on behalf of the French half-breeds, who have prevented me from

[1] Pope, *Memoirs of Sir John A. Macdonald*, vol. ii.

proceeding to Fort Garry, stating their complaints or wishes in reference to the new Government.

As the representative of the Sovereign, to whom you and they owe—and, as I am told, do not wish to deny—allegiance, it is proper that some such communication should reach me. It will be a great misfortune to us all, I think, if I am obliged to return to Canada and hand over the powers of government there to a military ruler. This will be the inevitable result unless we find some solution of the present difficulty very soon.

I have full powers from the Government, as well as the strongest desire personally, to meet all just claims of every class and section of the people. Why should you not come to me and discuss the matter?

I beg you to believe that what has occurred will not affect my mind against you or those for whom you may be authorised to speak.

The interview proposed must be without the knowledge or privity of certain American citizens who pretend to be *en rapport* with you. I trust to your honour on this point.—Very faithfully yours,

WILLIAM MCDOUGALL.

It was a trump card, but it did not win the trick. Riel (unmoved even by the *Esquire*) treated the mission "most contemptuously," returning no answer.

On the 16th McDougall wrote to Governor Mactavish, generously reinstating the sick man in his position:

If, in consequence of the action of the Dominion Government (withholding payment to the Hudson's Bay Company of the purchase money), the surrender and transfer of the country did *not* take place on the first day of December, as previously agreed upon, then you are the chief executive officer as before, and responsible for the preservation of the peace and the enforcement of the law.

If, on the other hand, the transfer *did* take place on the first day of December, then, I take it, my commission came into force, and the notice in the form of a proclamation, issued by my authority on that day, correctly recited the facts and disclosed the legal status of the respective parties.

"About the time of Mr. McDougall's departure from Pembina," according to one of the settlers at Red River, "it became generally known throughout the settlement that the Proclamation he had issued as coming from the Queen

was a false one, and it was strange to perceive the complete revulsion of feeling that took place among the settlers generally. If there was one thing more than another that assisted to strengthen the hands of Riel, it was that. People who had professed to be supporters of the incoming Government at once cooled in their ardour, and this led the way, more than anything else, to place Riel in the position which he afterwards held."

Governor McDougall was no longer at Pembina. Slowly and in anger he shaped his course southward, and on December 21st, at two o'clock in the afternoon, encountered two important travellers on the road.

* * * * * *

On November 24th Mr. Donald Smith, in Montreal, received from Sir Stafford Northcote, the Company's London Governor, a private letter which expressed the deep concern of himself and his fellow-directors at the unlooked-for occurrence at Red River which promised to jeopardise the Company's interests.

By the same English mail Mr. Smith also received an official letter from the Company's secretary, in which the Governor and directors offered their moral aid to the Canadian Government, leaving it to their General Manager to convey this assurance to the Ministry.

The situation was indeed serious and no time was to be lost. But so great was his own delicacy and his reluctance even to seem to wound the morbid susceptibilities of Governor Mactavish, that he dispatched to the latter a copy of the letter he now forwarded to Ottawa :

HUDSON'S BAY COMPANY'S OFFICE, MONTREAL,
November 24, 1869.

THE HON. THE SECRETARY OF STATE OF CANADA, OTTAWA.

SIR,—I have to-day received from the Hudson's Bay House, London, an extract of a letter from Governor Mactavish, dated Fort Garry, 12th October, and have now the honour of transmitting it to you. In doing so, I am directed by the Governor and Committee

Hudson's Bay Company's Office
Montreal 24th Nov. 1869

The Hon.ble
The Secretary of State for Canada
Ottawa

Sir,

I have to day received from the Hudson's Bay House London, an extract of a letter from Governor Macleavie, dated Fort Garry 12th October, and have now the honor of transmitting it to you. In doing so Gov. directed by the Governor and Committee to state that the Company are anxious to afford all the assistance in their power in inducing the Red River people to allow the surveys to be proceeded with, and to use their influence in any other manner with the view of assisting the authorities at Red River to make their arrangements for the government of the Country.

And in view of the more serious aspect which affairs at Red River have recently assumed, I beg further on behalf of the Company to affirm the assurance that their Governors, Factors and Officers generally will use their influence and best efforts to restore and maintain order throughout the Territory.

I have the honor to be
Sir
Your obedient Servant
Donald Smith

Reduced facsimile of Donald Smith's letter to the Canadian Government in connection with the Red River Rebellion.

to state that the Company are anxious to afford all the assistance in their power in inducing the Red River people to allow the surveys to be proceeded with, and to use their influence in any other manner with the view of assisting the authorities at Red River to make their arrangements for the government of the country.

And in view of the more serious aspect which affairs at Red River have recently assumed, I beg further on behalf of the Company to offer assurance that their Governors, Factors, and Officers generally will use their influence and best efforts to restore and maintain order throughout the territory.

I have the honour to be, Sir, your obedient servant,

DON. A. SMITH.

On November 28th Mr. Smith read the following in the Montreal *Gazette* from a Red River correspondent:

So far the Hudson's Bay Government has done nothing to quell the disturbance—at least as far as I have heard. It is the opinion here that if they had taken active steps some time since the insurgent movement would have been easily put down and what the end may be now is not so easy to foretell.

At the same time he received a communication from Governor Mactavish confirming the report that the Company's premises had been seized by the insurgents. It was dated from Fort Garry on November 9th, and read:

I regret very much to have to inform you that the Honourable William McDougall, who had been warned by the Canadian half-breeds of this settlement not to come into the Colony, on his arrival at Pembina has been, within the last week, driven out of the Company's establishment, forced to withdraw within the American lines by an armed force of that same portion of our population. At the same time that they sent to drive back McDougall, a party was sent here to occupy this establishment under the pretext of protecting it, and though their protection was declined they still remain, and it would appear are determined to go to greater lengths than they have yet done, as the nominal leaders of the movement have invited delegates from the other portions of the population to meet them on the 16th instant to consider the condition of the country as well as to express their views as to the form of Government to be adopted.

While replying to this officially Mr. Smith also addressed the following personally to Mr. Mactavish:

MONTREAL, *November* 28, 1869.

DEAR MR. MACTAVISH,—Your brother has very kindly shown me your letter to him of the 10th inst. I fully share your indignation at the informality of which both the British and Ottawa Governments have been guilty in not furnishing you with any official notification of the proposed changes, but have entrusted the whole matter to Mr. McDougall's discretion. With regard to what you say about the Canadians, I cannot but venture to remind you that the officers of the Company, in so far as they possess a share in the fur trade, owe their status to the independent traders and merchants of Montreal who effected the coalition of 1821, and that consequently our whole body has a historic connection with Canada. . . . Altogether apart, therefore, from the unfortunate manner in which your status and authority has been disregarded, I for one hold that our interests should properly lie with Canada rather than with any alternative form of government.

It is wholly inconceivable that any of our people should dream of joining their fortunes to the Americans and thus sacrificing their birthright, no matter what the provocation afforded by such men as Dr. Schultz. Yet if Mr. Riel's party is permitted to gain the ascendancy, they will either become the prey or the associates of hordes of filibusters even now ready to pour into the territory. On the other hand, the establishment of a Crown Colony could only serve to delay a final, and now, as I think, inevitable settlement, and debar us from any substantial advantages which we are now hoping to reap from the transfer.—Believe me, my dear Mr. Mactavish, very faithfully yours,

DON. A. SMITH.

While the ink was still wet on this letter there came a telegram from the Prime Minister, Sir John Macdonald, requesting the presence of Mr. Smith at Ottawa in order to have the benefit of his advice and opinions.

On the 29th Mr. Smith arrived in the capital, and he and the great political leader, Sir John A. Macdonald, met for the first time.

Sir John's first words were, "This is a very serious business, Mr. Smith." The latter replied, "Very serious indeed."

"I have sent for you," Sir John continued, "first in order to inform you that unless the aspect of affairs alters very much I fear that it will be quite impossible for Canada

to fulfil her part of the bargain; and, secondly, because I wished to ascertain from you exactly what the attitude of the Hudson's Bay Company's officers is towards this outbreak in the North-West. I want you to speak frankly and freely. We, on our side, are ready to acknowledge any mistakes we have committed. But when we undertook the transfer we certainly relied upon the ability of the Company to fulfil its share of the bargain. Evidently we expected too much. We now learn that certain differences exist between the Company and its officers in the North-West. Apparently your Governor in England and your Governor in Rupert's Land do not see eye to eye on this important matter. What are we to do ? "

" I told the Premier," wrote Mr. Smith, " that since he desired me to express my views frankly I thought a grave mistake had been committed by the Canadian Government in not securing the co-operation and good will of Mr. Mactavish before sending Mr. McDougall and the previous emissaries, Messrs, Snow and Mair, into the country."

Sir John instantly rejoined : " We supposed that Sir Stafford Northcote and the other directors in London had secured this co-operation and good will beforehand. You do not doubt that Governor Mactavish will fulfil his duty ? "

Mr. Smith replied that he was convinced that Mr. Mactavish, however aggrieved he might feel personally, was a man of the strictest honour, and would strive earnestly to carry out his instructions, both in letter and spirit. At the same time, he said, he was in failing health, and the strain of the last few months had told severely upon him.

Sir John thereupon declared that this circumstance greatly added to the seriousness of the situation. He then asked me as to the character and views of Dr. Cowan, Mr. J. H. McTavish and others at Fort Garry, declaring that while the Government wished to do everything to help McDougall out of his scrape and to preserve the peace, they did not intend that the Hudson's Bay Company should evade

any of its responsibilities. "Not a penny," he said, "should be paid until the peaceable possession was assured."

After an interview of about two hours Mr. Smith took his leave, Sir John urging him not to leave the city until he had received important dispatches hourly expected from London.

On the following day the Hon. Mr. Howe informed Mr. Smith that the Ministry regarded it as highly unfortunate that Bishop Taché, whose influence with the half-breeds was very great, should not be at his post at Red River, that under the circumstances they had been advised to dispatch a Roman Catholic priest who would endeavour to pour oil on the troubled waters. On Thursday, December 1st, the day on which the transfer was to have come into effect, Mr. Smith again saw the Prime Minister. The former has left a record of the interview :

"He said to me, 'The Hudson's Bay Company people are suspected—I don't say whether there is anything in it or not, but all the letters I get from the unprejudiced observers in the North-West, or people who have lived in the North-West, continually make a point of this, that the Company's people are suspected of secretly fomenting this insurrection.'

"To this I replied, 'I doubt very much if there are any unprejudiced persons at all living in the North-West. It must be manifest to you that the adjustment of the present difficulty would be of greater advantage to the Company and the officers of the Company than to any private individuals. If no settlement occurs there will be no transfer, and if there is no transfer of the territory law and order and property will be at the mercy of the most lawless members of the community until the Americans step in and annex it.'

"To this the Prime Minister said : 'It would be a great advantage to us if you would preach this view to your fellow-

officers at Fort Garry. Why don't you go ?' I replied instantly that I would be prepared to go if circumstances appeared to warrant it."

In his present proceeding Mr. Smith was conscious that the Company might disavow him, but already he had begun to perceive the possibility of a line of divergence from the interests of the London Board and the interests of himself and the officers of the fur trade. He was, as he openly declared a few weeks later, ready to resign his commission in the Company's service. He felt it was his duty to proceed to Red River and act as an intermediary between the discontented and distrustful fur-traders, the half-breed insurgents, and the so-called Canadian party led by Dr. Schultz. Twenty-four hours after this interview the Prime Minister wrote to Howe :

OTTAWA,
December 3, 1869.

Private and Confidential.

MY DEAR HOWE,—I am now strongly of opinion that we should make instant use of D. A. Smith. In the chat I had with him to-day he took high ground, declared himself a staunch *Canadian*, and lost no opportunity of emphasising his own complete impartiality, as well as the desire of the Company to effect a speedy settlement of this unhappy business. If the Hudson's Bay officers are implicated in fomenting the disturbance, Smith can, from his position, discourage them.—Very faithfully yours,

JOHN A. MACDONALD.

The result was the appointment of Donald A. Smith as Canadian Commissioner to Red River, and he hastened back to Montreal to prepare for his journey.

So well did Mr. Smith keep his counsel that it was not until December 9th that any knowledge of his intended journey became current. On the morning of that day the *Gazette* published the following :

It is rumoured that Donald A. Smith, Esq., General Manager of the Hudson's Bay Company in Canada, has instructions from the Company to proceed to Red River with as little delay as possible to aid Governor Mactavish in consequence of his illness.

It was also stated that Vicar-General Thibault and Colonel De Salaberry had been appointed Commissioners from the Canadian Government. Thus, on the very eve of Mr. Smith's departure, it was commonly supposed that he went simply as an official of the Hudson's Bay Company, which had been no party to the adventure; and he did not see fit to interfere with this belief.

On the same day the Prime Minister drew up the formal instructions to the newly appointed Commissioner:

Friday, December 9.

My dear Howe,—I send you my idea as to what the letter to Mr. Smith should be, which is at your service.

There should be an official letter from you to McDougall covering a copy of the letter to Smith and instructing him to aid Mr. Smith in his mission.—Yours always,

J. A. M.

Office of Secretary of State for the Provinces,
Ottawa,
December 10, 1869.

Donald A. Smith, Esq., Montreal.

Sir,—I have the honour to inform you that His Excellency the Governor-General has been pleased to appoint you Special Commissioner to enquire into and report upon the causes and extent of the armed obstructions offered at the Red River, in the North-West Territories, to the peaceful ingress of the Hon. Wm. McDougall, the gentleman selected to be the Lieutenant-Governor of that country, on its union with Canada.

Also to inquire into and report upon the causes of the discontent and dissatisfaction at the proposed change that now exists there.

Also to explain to the inhabitants the principles on which the Government of Canada intends to govern the country, and to remove any misapprehensions that may exist on the subject.

Also to take such steps, in concert with Mr. McDougall and Governor Mactavish, as may seem most proper for effecting the peaceable transfer of the country and the government from the Hudson's Bay authorities to the Government of the Dominion. You will consider this communication as your letter of appointment as Government Commissioner.

With this letter you will receive:

A copy of the letter of instructions given to Mr. McDougall on leaving Ottawa, dated 28th September last;

Copy of a further letter of instruction to Mr. McDougall, dated 7th instant;

Copy of the Proclamation issued by His Excellency the Governor-General, addressed to the inhabitants of the North-West Territories by the express desire of Her Majesty.

These will enable you to speak authoritatively on the subject of your mission.

You will proceed with all despatch to Pembina, and arrange with Mr. McDougall as to your future course of action, and then go on to Fort Garry, and take such steps as, after such consultation, may seem most expedient. You will, of course, consult Governor Mactavish and endeavour to arrange one system of concerted action in the pacification of the country, with Mr. McDougall, the Hudson's Bay authorities and yourself.

As the information received by the Government here is necessarily imperfect, and as the circumstances at Red River are continually changing, it is not considered expedient to hamper you with more specific instructions. You will, therefore, act according to the best of your judgment in concert with Mr. McDougall, and you will keep me fully informed by every mail of the progress of events.

In addition to the more immediate object of your mission, you are requested to report on the best mode of dealing with the Indian tribes in the country, and generally to make such suggestions as may occur to you as to the requirements of the country for the future.

—I have, etc.,

JOSEPH HOWE, *Secretary.*

It so chanced that Dr. Charles Tupper, a prominent Nova Scotian member, was also, for private reasons, about to take a private journey to Fort Garry. His daughter was the wife of Captain Cameron, of the Royal Artillery, who had gone out as one of Governor McDougall's suite, and was now believed to be in danger.

It was on a bitterly cold morning, December 13th, that Mr. Smith, accompanied by his brother-in-law, Mr. Richard Hardisty, and Dr. Tupper, M.P., left the capital. So deeply concerned was Mr. Howe for the success of the mission that he came down to the railway station to bid the travellers farewell. He said he had been requested by His Excellency, Sir John Young (afterwards Lord Lisgar), to hand Mr. Smith the following letter:

OTTAWA,
December 12, 1869.

MY DEAR MR. SMITH,—I learn with satisfaction that you have placed your services at the disposal of the Canadian Government, and that you are proceeding to Red River to give the parties that are at variance the benefit of your experience, influence and mediation.

In my capacity as Her Majesty's representative in the British North American possessions, I have addressed letters to Governor Mactavish, the Protestant Bishop of Rupert's Land, and the Vicar-General, who acts in lieu of the Roman Catholic Bishop during his presence in Rome. I have sent them copies of the message received by telegraph from Her Majesty's Secretary of State, which forms the staple of the Proclamation addressed to her subjects in the North-West Territory. You will observe that it calls upon all who have any complaints to make, or wishes to express, to address themselves to me as Her Majesty's representative. And you may state, with the utmost confidence, that the Imperial Government has no intention of acting otherwise—or permitting others to act otherwise—than in perfect good faith towards the inhabitants of the Red River district of the North West.

The people may rely upon it that respect and protection will be extended to the different religious persuasions, that titles to every description of property will be perfectly guarded, and that all the franchises which have existed, or which the people may prove themselves qualified to exercise, shall be duly continued or liberally conferred.

In declaring the desire and determination of Her Majesty's Cabinet, you may very safely use the terms of the ancient formula that "Right shall be done in all cases."

Wishing you a prosperous journey and all success in your mission, of peace and good will, I remain, faithfully yours,

JOHN YOUNG.

In addition, Mr. Smith also bore a communication from the new Governor-General to the Governor of Assiniboia, in itself testimony that the Government had realised its sins of omission and desired to rectify them, even at the eleventh hour.

GOVERNMENT HOUSE, OTTAWA,
December 6, 1869.

W. MACTAVISH, ESQ., *Governor of Assiniboia.*

SIR,—I have the honour to address you in my capacity as representative of the Queen and Governor-General of Her Majesty's British

North American Possessions, and enclose for your information a copy of a message received from Earl Granville, in reply to the account which I sent officially of the events occurring in Red River Settlement. The message conveys the matured opinion of the Imperial Cabinet. The proclamation I have issued is based on it; and you will observe that it refers all who have desires to express or complaints to make to refer to me, as invested with authority on behalf of the British Government. And the inhabitants of Rupert's Land, of all classes and persuasions, may rest assured that Her Majesty's Government has no intention of interfering with setting aside, or allowing others to interfere with or set aside, the religions, the rights or the franchise hitherto enjoyed, or to which they may hereafter prove themselves equal.

Make what use you think best of this communication and of the enclosed.

I have the honour to be your most humble and obedient servant,

JOHN YOUNG.

Once in the train, the subject of Riel and McDougall was not mentioned; the conversation ran upon political affairs in England and the character of the party leaders. On reaching Toronto, Mr. Smith said: "I am greatly interested in this city because I thought of settling here or hereabouts thirty years ago." He then related some of the inducements which were held out in Britain to immigrants, especially those with means, in the "'thirties."

Late on the evening of the 14th, Chicago was reached, and Mr. Smith remarked: "Dr. Tupper, I am greatly interested in this city for a special reason. Many years ago I thought of settling here." Tupper laughed, and when the party reached St. Paul, he remarked: "Now, Mr. Smith, I am sure you will be especially interested in St. Paul, because you once thought of settling here?"

"That is perfectly true," replied his companion with a smile. "And," he added, "I am not sure I shan't put some of my eggs into St. Paul's basket yet. The Company does a flourishing business now with this city."

The conversation touched on Commissioner Smith's errand, when, in glancing over his papers, he expressed an

apprehension that these, if found on his person, might be summarily destroyed by Riel's party.

Dr. Tupper: "Do you think they would dare do that? Besides, as a Hudson's Bay officer you will be more or less *persona grata.*"

Mr. Smith: "I may be *persona grata* to a section of the people there, but I doubt it."

Dr. Tupper was a little surprised at this, but did not press for an explanation. He had then no inkling of the fact that there was a considerable lack of cordiality amongst the North-Western officers towards the unknown Labrador man who had in some mysterious fashion been promoted over their heads.

Mr. Smith resumed: "In any case, I can have no *prima facie* recommendation to the Canadian party. This being so, if I possessed some Canadian status, apart from my commission, it would be a decided advantage. I might get appointed a member of the Privy Council."

"That certainly would be a great advantage. It is a pity that was not thought of before we left Ottawa."

"Oh, it is not too late. If the state of affairs continues serious, I shall telegraph to Sir John requesting to be appointed to the Privy Council."

Of this proposal one can only remark that it betokened a striking confidence in his own powers, and appreciation of his position. Mr. Kittson, to whom the proposal also was confided, long afterwards said: "For a gentleman comparatively so unknown as Mr. Smith to demand a Privy Councillorship fairly took my breath away."

On arrival at St. Paul the travellers were met by Mr. Norman Kittson and others. Mr. Wheelock, a Nova Scotian and editor of the St. Paul *Pioneer Press,* furnished them with the latest tidings from Red River and a batch of rumours from Pembina.

To Sir John A. Macdonald, Mr. Smith sent the following:

"In Serious Jeopardy"

St. Paul, Minnesota,

December 17, 1869.

Report credited here Governor Mactavish under arrest. Situation grave, if not critical; sympathy here wholly with insurgents. Not at all probable can take in my written documents from Ottawa. To meet this would strengthen my hands considerably, and not clash with McDougall's commission, if appointed to Privy Council, say eight days hence. This I ask not on personal grounds, but as giving assurance to malcontents that promises made on the part of Government would be performed in good faith. Be assured I will not compromise Government. Will be in advance of Thibault and De Salaberry; answer immediately telegram to Kittson; assent or dissent. Operator mark on envelope, "Private and Confidential."

The Prime Minister's breath, it would seem, was also "taken away." In his reply, he said briefly: "Smith can state his appointment as Member of Council of Territory." There are two ways of looking at this—either it was a rebuke, or it betrayed a strange ignorance of the situation. For Mr. Smith to have stated his appointment as a Member of the Council of an unorganised territory, wherein Canada had no jurisdiction, would have been sheer madness.

The sympathy of the St. Paul Fenians and professional filibusters with the insurgents was beyond all question. How keen was the surveillance over all travellers for Red River, the following heroic effusion testified. It was handed to Mr. Smith as he was leaving the hotel at St. Paul.

Sir,—I charge you on your life not to disregard the solemn warning contained in this letter. It has come to my knowledge that you and the persons who accompany you are emissaries from the Canadian Provincial Government. Beware how you indulge the vain hope that you will succeed where the Orangeman McDougall failed. The destiny of Red River is in its own hands, and is not to be tampered with by outsiders. An honest, true-hearted patriot will soon be at the head of affairs. His situation will demand vigour and, if necessity arises, rigour. Let not ambition or mistaken zeal place you in such a position that your lives may be forfeit! Pause now before it is too late! Your blood be upon your own head. Remember this warning—the moment you attempt to cross the present American boundary line you will be in serious jeopardy.

(*Signed*) Phœnix.

CHAPTER X

UNDERMINING THE DICTATOR (1869-70)

WESTWARD from the capital of Minnesota there ran a line of railway to which its projectors had given a significant title of the St. Paul and Pacific. It had originally been intended that this road should connect with other railway systems and eventually reach the shores of Oregon. But this consummation had been frustrated by want of capital; and, at the conclusion of the American Civil War, and for some time afterwards, the constructed and effective portion of the St. Paul and Pacific ceased abruptly at the little frontier settlement of Breckenridge.

On December 17th, 1869, it was difficult for the three travellers, with whose present fortunes we are now concerned, to estimate justly the character of the country through which the railway ran. It was commonly spoken of as fertile, although visited periodically by devastating clouds of grasshoppers, which would descend upon it and, in a single night, convert it into an arid, naked desert. Knowledge of this drawback had not prevented large numbers of sturdy and intelligent settlers, chiefly of German and Scandinavian nationality, from taking up homesteads along the route, and establishing themselves comfortably and hopefully with their families.

Over and above this fact, and the certain prospect of an ever-increasing immigration into the American North-West, was another—namely, that this line, for the distance it actually traversed, formed a link in a future chain of land communication with the new country, whether colony, province, or republic, of Red River. The story of Mr.

Smith's financial connection with this railway belongs to another chapter : it will suffice for the moment to say that his historic association began at this time, when, with his two companions, he gazed out of the car windows at the snow-covered prairie between St. Paul and Breckenridge.

Leaving the railway, there came a long stage drive of two days to Fort Abercrombie, which was reached after dark on December 19th. In a straight line, from Fort Abercrombie to Pembina, across the prairie, the distance is perhaps a couple of hundred miles; but so circuitous is the Red River between these points that it traverses thrice that distance. " We struck across the treeless prairie," wrote Sir Charles Tupper in his narrative of that journey, " making the points on Red River for dinner and night. Along the margin of the river the land for some fifty yards in length is some ten feet lower than the prairie, and that belt is covered with forest trees. At night we stopped in this forest belt and made a large fire from fallen timber. There was about a foot of snow on the ground, which we cleared away with a shovel, put an indiarubber cloth on the ground, our mattress on that, and then our blankets and buffalo skin over all. We lay in the open air with our feet to the fire, which rarefied the air and made it quite comfortable."

At the last house at which they dined on the prairie before reaching Fort Abercrombie, broiled elk was served. The landlord took them to an outhouse where " six fine elk were standing like horses in a stall, all frozen stiff," and gave them a hindquarter for their journey. Yet they carried as part of their baggage a box, two feet square, prepared for their journey by Mr. Kittson, agent of the Hudson's Bay Company at St. Paul. It contained potted chicken, tongue, etc., brandy, whisky, and wine, with bread, biscuits and cake. " This," remarked Sir Charles Tupper, " we ignored. We fried elk meat in butter with potatoes, and ate that with bread, and drank tea by the pint. At

Fort Abercrombie we set a tin pail of new milk out at night, and in the morning it was frozen solid. This we broke with a hatchet for use in the tea." When the elk was gone, " we took to fat pork with potatoes instead. The ozone we were breathing constantly was so stimulating that we wanted nothing stronger than tea by way of stimulant, and when we reached Pembina, Mr. Smith gave the box of provisions which we had never opened to my daughter."

In a canvas-covered sled drawn by two horses, the party proceeded from Fort Abercrombie to Georgetown, a Hudson's Bay post. Here was the scene of a terrible Sioux massacre seven years previously, when the display of the British flag had saved the Company's servants and property from destruction. At Georgetown the travellers heard that Mr. McDougall and his party had already left Pembina. Thus it came about that at two o'clock on the afternoon of the 21st the cavalcade of the beaten and discomfited Governor was descried approaching them along the snow-covered road.

Truly, here was a picture worthy of a painter, however little the painter—unless he happened also to have been an artist—would have deemed it alluring.

The central figures, who thus greeted each other in the heart of mid-winter, in the midst of an icy and desolate prairie, destined to teem with millions of souls, were all three of the same age. William McDougall, a man of intellect, character and ambition, had set out as ruler of Rupert's Land two short months before full of zeal and confidence, but Fate had in truth been cruel. McDougall's political career was now as surely ended as Donald Smith's forty year long political and diplomatic course had just begun.

Two future High Commissioners for Canada, one of them fated also to be her Prime Minister, and the other to bear a name long synonymous throughout the British Empire with Canada itself, after a brief and embarrassed

greeting, held a hurried conversation with McDougall standing knee-deep in the snow.

McDougall related nervously what had happened; he gave the last tidings he had received from Fort Garry.

On his part, Dr. Tupper explained that he had been fearful of the safety of his daughter, Mrs. Cameron, whose husband was reported to be amongst Riel's prisoners. At the mention of Captain Cameron, McDougall's brow clouded. Having quarrelled with that officer (who had been none of his own choosing), he observed that, if calamity had overtaken him, the young man had brought it upon his own head. He washed his hands of Captain Cameron. Dr. Tupper protested; he understood his son-in-law was a member of McDougall's Government—the Minister of Militia—and, as such, of rank and consequence in the country.[1]

The subject was dropped; and Dr. Tupper turned to chat with a more authentic member of the McDougall cabinet, Mr. Richards, the Attorney-General, who had a sad tale to unfold of the sufferings of the party. He said he had not had his clothes off for two months, living in hourly peril of losing his life. While Mr. Smith lingered to talk to Mr. McDougall, his brother-in-law, Hardisty, pushed on to the next point, about a mile distant, where the party intended to camp for the night.

"After a little time," continued Sir Charles Tupper, "I said I would go on, as I thought they might wish to converse together privately. When I was about half-way across the prairie to this point, half a dozen Indians, as if by magic, rose up before me. I had left my revolver in the sled. They could not speak a word of English or French, except 'Red Lake.' They said in answer to my signal as to where they came from: 'Red Lake.' I had

[1] Mr. McDougall wrote: "In a short conversation with Dr. Tupper, whom I met on the plains, as I was returning to Canada, he informed me that Captain Cameron was sent to the North-West under a promise that he should be a member of my Government, and that he (Dr. Tupper) had that promise in writing. This was also news to me."

a racoon-skin coat on, which they felt over, and after jabbering away they passed on in the direction of Georgetown. I went on my way."

Learning that Mr. Donald Smith was a prominent Hudson's Bay Company official, Mr. McDougall's manner scarcely became more cordial. His feelings, on perusing the following, may be imagined:

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE PROVINCES,
OTTAWA,
December 10, 1869.

THE HON. W. MCDOUGALL, C.B.,
PEMBINA, UNITED STATES.

SIR,—This will be handed to you by Donald A. Smith, Esq., who goes to Pembina, on his way to Fort Garry at the special request of this Government.

I have the honour to enclose a copy of a letter of instructions which has been addressed to Mr. Smith, and have it in command to desire that you will consult and co-operate with that gentleman in order that, if possible, some peaceful solution may be found of the difficulties which obstruct your entrance to the new territory.—I have, etc.,

JOSEPH HOWE, *Secretary.*

Repeating the words "consult" and "co-operate," McDougall said it was now useless to waste time in talking over what was now past and done with. He had given Mr. Smith an account of recent occurrences at Red River, and was now in haste to reach St. Paul. After the interchange of a few more words, both gentlemen bowed and parted.

Mr. Smith and his party then resumed their journey.

"We reached Grand Forks," wrote Dr. Tupper, "on the 22nd, at 10.30 a.m., where we saw the Indians fishing on the river; slept at Antoine Girard's log-house; started at 4 a.m. on the 23rd, and dined (?) at North River at 8.30. As the horses became very tired, we walked the last eight miles. It was very cold. We camped half-way between Salt River and Little Salt River. On the 24th we started, after a cold night and bad dreams, at 8 a.m.,

reached Big Point at 1 p.m.—twelve miles from our camp and eighty miles from Pembina, stopped at Two Rivers for tea, and drove on with Antoine Girard to Pembina, which we reached at 11 p.m. on Christmas Eve. When we arrived we found that Captain Cameron was occupying the log-house erected by Mr. McDougall for his party.

"Mr. Smith went on to the Hudson's Bay Company's post, two miles north of Pembina. I wished to go on to Fort Garry with him, but he said this would not do, as all at Fort Garry knew the active part I had taken in bringing about Confederation, to which they assigned all their troubles. I told him that I had promised Sir John A. Macdonald to get into Fort Garry, and that I intended to do so. Mr. Smith said he would try to get them to allow me to go in to see Mr. Mactavish, who was very ill, and let me know as soon as possible."

Fearing the people at Pembina, whom he found very hostile to the Canadians, would prevent his going to Fort Garry, Dr. Tupper left Pembina after a couple of days, being only able to secure for his journey a buffalo-skin, a bottle of sherry, and a loaf of plain bread. When he reached the Hudson's Bay post, the half-breed boy who was driving said: "If you could get the factor here to lend us a toboggan, we would be much safer in case of a snowstorm; it would run over the snow, while our sleigh would stick."

"Drive in," ordered Tupper. "I can get anything he has."

He then knocked on the door, which, to his astonishment, was opened by his fellow-traveller, Mr. Smith.

"It is not possible," he exclaimed, "that you could be here for two days without seeing me, knowing, as you do, my great anxiety to get to Fort Garry just now and return!"

"It is at the cost of one's life to go to Fort Garry just now," said Smith. "Riel has seized the fort, and has all the arms and ammunition, and whisky. A man was shot

yesterday, and it is simply courting death to go there at present."

"But why did you not tell me this when you knew of my impatience to hear from you?" asked Tupper.

"Well, I knew that you were a very impetuous man, and I was afraid you would do something rash."

"I called here to ask your factor for the loan of a dog-cariole. Can I have it?" was the reply.

"Of course, you can have anything you wish; but for God's sake do not go there just now."

Tupper said he was much obliged, but had not come for advice; he would take the dog-cariole.

It only remains to say that Dr. Tupper pressed on to Fort Garry, which he reached about the same time, although by another route, as Mr. Smith. He saw Riel and Father Ritchot. The former, however, recommended his visitors to depart immediately from the settlement, and the doctor, although behaving very valiantly, deemed it prudent to comply.

We can now follow the fortunes of his late travelling companion. When Mr. Donald Smith arrived at Pembina and mentioned that he carried official letters from Hon. Mr. Howe, Mr. Watt, the Hudson's Bay agent, instantly exclaimed: "They will be seized; you must contrive some way of concealing them on your person." Various expedients were suggested. Mr. Smith, however, cut the discussion short by declaring his intention of leaving the documents in the care of Mr. McDougall's secretary, Provencher, who had remained behind.

"We will trust to making a few friends in the settlement who will undertake to bring in the papers when it can be done so safely." Moreover, this plan had the additional advantage that it allowed time for the receipt of Mr. Smith's commission. Retiring for a much needed rest, he and Hardisty arose soon after daybreak on Christmas Day, and pushed on to Fort Garry, which they reached on

the evening of the 27th, the very day that Riel assumed the rôle of " President."

To continue the narrative in Mr. Smith's own words:

" The gate of the fort we found open, but guarded by several armed men, who, on my desiring to be shown to Governor Mactavish's house, requested me to wait till they could communicate with their chief. In a short time Mr. Louis Riel appeared. I announced my name; he said he had heard of my arrival at Pembina, and was about to send off a party of men to bring me in. I then accompanied him to a room occupied by ten or a dozen men, whom he introduced to me as members of the ' Provisional Government.' He requested to know the purport of my visit, to which I replied in substance that I was connected with the Hudson's Bay Company, but also held a commission from the Canadian Government to the people of Red River, and would be prepared to produce my credentials as soon as they, the people, were willing to receive me.

" I was then asked to take an oath not to attempt to leave the fort that night, nor to upset their government, legally established. This request I peremptorily refused to comply with, but said that, being very tired, I had no desire to go outside the gate that night, and promised to take no immediate steps to forcibly upset the so-called ' Provisional Government,' legal or illegal as it might be, without first announcing my intention of doing so, Mr. Riel taking exception to the word illegal, while I insisted on retaining it. Mr. O'Donohoe, to get over the difficulty, remarked: ' That is as he ' (meaning myself) ' understands it,' to which I rejoined, ' Precisely so.' The above explanation I am the more particular in giving, as it has been reported that I at once acknowledged the Provisional Government to be legal. Neither then nor afterwards did I do so."

At the conclusion of this interview, Mr. Smith took up his quarters in the house previously occupied by the Company's officers, and requesting pen, ink, and paper, at once

wrote to his wife, this letter being entrusted to a messenger to convey it, if possible, to Pembina. He also sent a line to Mr. Kittson, at St. Paul, reporting that Riel had taken forcible possession of the Company's safe at Fort Garry containing over £1,000 in cash.

From that date until the close of February, Mr. Smith was, as he says, "virtually a prisoner within the fort, although with permission to go outside the walls for exercise, accompanied by two armed guards." Of this privilege, however, he never availed himself.

Yet, fortunately, he had an active lieutenant and agent in Richard Hardisty, whose movements, strange to say, were not restricted. The reason was that Hardisty had Indian blood in his veins; he spoke the Indian as well as the French tongue fluently. He had Métis friends in the settlement, and he freely consorted with them. Riel deemed it prudent to let Mr. Smith's relative alone.

On January 6th he again had a visit from Riel, and soon concluded that no good could arise from entering into any negotiations with his Council, even were he to admit its authority, which he was not prepared to do. When the Grand Vicar Thibault and Colonel de Salaberry appeared before the President and Council of the People, "some explanations and compliments were exchanged, after which the very rev. gentleman and his associates were politely bowed out and lost sight of."

For a full fortnight after Mr. Smith's arrival there was no precise knowledge in the settlement of his errand as Commissioner from the Canadian Government. He himself was under close surveillance, two or more guards being charged with that duty: but this was not the case with his brother-in-law, Mr. Hardisty. The latter now began to busy himself in carrying out Mr. Smith's plan, which was, in effect, to secure partisans amongst the half-breeds. This was a delicate matter, requiring considerable tact, but Mr. Hardisty was well qualified to deal with it. Where promises

would not serve, pecuniary bribes were effective. Not having a large supply of cash, even after borrowing from two gentlemen in Winnipeg, and not able to procure Hudson's Bay notes, he issued a sort of assignats, which were redeemable at Pembina or any Company's post. These were for small amounts, rarely more than £10 sterling; but between £200 and £300 was expended in this secret fashion, and as much more promised to those Métis who would rally to Mr. Smith's support. That support was now to be exacted.

A Methodist clergyman, the Rev. John Young, has recorded in a letter written from Winnipeg on January 22nd, his astonishment that the "gentleman who landed here a few weeks ago, and reported himself at Riel's headquarters as Mr. Smith, an official of the Hudson's Bay Company," and "had not been outside the fort since his arrival, should suddenly have developed into a real (and if you will) 'live' commissioner, duly appointed and fully accredited by His Excellency the Governor-General of Canada!"

To continue Mr. Young's narrative:

"After remaining quiet for some two weeks he (Mr. Smith) deemed it time to be 'up and doing,' and accordingly, it is said, he intimated to Mr. Riel that he was now under instructions to inform him that when he should have permission to do so, he had certain things to say to him from the Governor of Canada, and also certain documents at Pembina which he would like to present. This information, I doubt not, took our little Napoleon by surprise, but as he keeps his wits generally about him, Riel directed, I understand, a guard to accompany Hardisty and bring in the papers."[1]

In the meantime, Mr. Smith, for his part, had frequent visits in the fort from some of the most influential and most reliable men in the settlement, who gladly made known to

[1] Rev. J. Young: *Manitoba Memories.*

the people generally the liberal intentions of the Canadian Government, and in consequence one after another of Riel's councillors seceded from him, and being joined by their friends and many of their compatriots and co-religionists, who had throughout held aloof from the insurgents, they determined no longer to submit to his dictation.

This change evidently had a marked effect upon Riel, causing him to alter his tactics and to profess a desire for an accommodation with Canada. Accordingly, on January 14th, he "informed me," wrote Mr. Smith, "that he had seen Messrs. Thibault and de Salaberry, whose instructions did not authorise them to give assurances that the people would be secured in possession of their rights on entering into the Confederation, their errand being merely to calm the French half-breeds.

"He then asked to see my commission, and on my explaining that, owing entirely to the action taken by himself, it was not in my possession, in an excited yet faltering manner, he said: 'Yes, I know, 'tis a great pity; but how soon could you have it?' 'Probably in five or six days,' I replied. 'That is too long, far too long,' he responded, and then asked where the documents were deposited, requesting at the same time a written order for their delivery to his messenger. To this I would not accede, but on his reassuring me that they would be delivered into my hands, and that I should be afforded an opportunity of communicating their contents to the people, I consented to send a friend for them.

"It was so decided, and immediately after the messenger had received his instructions from me, I was placed under strict arrest, a captain's guard being assigned me, whose instructions were not to lose sight of me, day or night, and prevent me from communicating either verbally or in writing with any individual. I protested, saying: 'Am I to consider myself a prisoner?' He replied: 'Certainly

not; I have the utmost confidence in your honour, but circumstances demand this.' "

It was now about ten at night, and the messenger, Mr. Hardisty, having been dispatched, Mr. Smith retired to bed, only to be awakened between two and three o'clock in the morning by Riel, who, with a guard, stood by his bedside and again demanded a written order for the delivery of the official papers. This Smith again peremptorily refused to give.

Meanwhile, the well-affected French party were made aware by Hardisty of what had happened, and having no trust in Riel's good faith, determined to prevent the papers from falling into his hands. They assembled some eighty men, who met Hardisty on his way back, and were escorting him when, on January 18th, about ten miles from the fort, they were accosted by Riel and some of his party and by Abbé Ritchot. An altercation occurred. Riel drew a pistol, saying he would not be taken alive in his own country. On this, a weapon was levelled at his own head, which had a salutary effect. Abbé Ritchot, having interposed, was unceremoniously told to stand aside and not to interfere with matters unconnected with his spiritual duties. Mr. Smith reported that all those who took part in this affair were Roman Catholics and, with one or two exceptions, French half-breeds. Violence being averted, the whole party proceeded to Fort Garry, where they arrived in the forenoon. A few minutes before they entered the house, Father Thibault, Father Lestanc, and Colonel de Salaberry called upon Commissioner Smith, being the first, with the exception of his guard, with whom he had been permitted to converse for four days.

" They appeared to be much concerned," reported Mr. Smith, " and said it was currently reported I had been endeavouring to incite the different parties to hostile collisions. I repudiated any such charge, explaining that I had acted only in the cause of peace and order, and with

the desire of making the people, both French and English, fully acquainted with the liberal views of the Canadian Government, so that a peaceful transfer of the territory might be effected, adding that I was pleased to think there was every likelihood this would speedily be accomplished.

" In the meantime, the party in possession of my papers entered the adjoining room, in which Pére Lestanc joined them, while Messrs. Thibault and de Salaberry went outside. Immediately after they retired, Mr. Riel came to me, saying : ' Your commission is here, but in the hands of men who had no right to have it.' I expressed satisfaction that it had been brought in, and said, now being in possession of it, I must be relieved from all restraint, and be permitted freely to communicate with the people. He at once removed the guard, and we went up to the party who had just arrived.

" Messrs. Riel and O'Donohoe, with a few of their friends, were present, and vehemently protested against the action now being taken, while the ex-councillors accused them of treason to the Imperial Crown, and of using every effort to bring about the annexation of the country to the United States. Riel replied that was only supposing the people desired it, but that he was willing the question should be submitted to them. Père Lestanc spoke warmly in favour of the ' President ' (Riel), who, he said, had acted so as to merit the gratitude of his countrymen, and begged them still to place confidence in him. This evidently had no effect, and ultimately, after a good deal of recrimination, it was arranged that a meeting of the inhabitants from all parts of the settlement should be called for the morrow, the 19th, at which the papers bearing on the subject should be read, a guard of forty men remaining in the house to ensure the safe keeping of the documents.

" Riel's men were now falling away from him, while the loyal party expressed their determination no longer to

be guided in the matter either by him or by Père Lestanc and his associates, but at the same time spoke warmly of their attachment to the Rev. Mr. Thibault, and complained of the restraint imposed upon him. They were full of hope, and confident that the following day would bring with it complete success to the cause of Canada.

" That night, or rather, about three o'clock in the morning of the 19th, Père Lestanc visited them, and, most unfortunately, the Grand Vicar Thibault accompanied him, I felt, convinced against his own better judgment, for I believe him to be a truly honourable man, but wanting in resolution to withstand the pressure put upon him.[1] Their visit occupied three or four hours, and resulted in the defection of a majority of the party, which, of course, had its effect on many outside. This we felt to be a bad blow; but, notwithstanding, it was determined to go on with the meeting which had been convened for noon that day.

" The hour for the meeting having arrived, and Colonel de Salaberry not yet on the ground, I sent a friend and afterwards dispatched a note to him, expressing hope that by his presence he would countenance the proceedings on the part of Canada. He at length came, accompanied by Rev. Mr. Thibault, and I begged they would be good enough to take places with me on the platform, and requested Colonel de Salaberry to act as interpreter, so that the contents of the several documents and any observations made in English might be faithfully translated to the French party. He kindly promised to do so, but perhaps feeling some diffidence in himself, which I endeavoured to overcome, he proposed that Mr. Riel should be appointed interpreter, and this was carried before the meeting had time to reflect on the import of the motion. This had a most damaging effect on the cause of order; but I am very far

[1] The above allusions to Père Thibault Mr. Smith subsequently deleted from his *Report*, on Mr. Howe's suggestion.

from saying that it was premeditated on the part of Colonel de Salaberry, although I feel it to be a duty to state the facts."

Never before in the history of the British Empire was a public meeting held under such conditions as that which took place at Fort Garry on January 19th, 1870. Indeed, it would be difficult in all history to find a parallel, even in the assembly of Polish patriots in the public square of Warsaw in 1830, the out-of-doors deliberations of the Moscow Patriotic Committee in the terrible winter of 1812, the memorable gathering in Podolia in 1786, or in the congregations of the Jesuits of New France. In the open air, with the thermometer twenty degrees below zero, in the teeth of a biting blast, this meeting was conducted with a respect for decorum and ancient parliamentary methods worthy of Westminster itself. Icicles hung on men's beards; the countenances of many of the aged in that vast sea of faces were pinched and blue with cold.

Out of the precincts of the fort four or five men emerged and stepped out upon the small platform, flanked by two tumbrils, known locally as "Red River carts." First came Louis Riel, President of the Provisional Government. His eyes burnt with a strange brightness, his dark skin was overshot with pallor, his lips were sternly compressed. At sight of him a cheer arose up from the French and half-breeds, men of his own race, a cheer half Indian, half Highland, not at all a French acclamation. Some of the Scottish and English settlers feebly joined in the cheer, perhaps through policy; they did not know yet what to make of Riel. Some openly admired him; many were afraid. On one side stood O'Donohoe, the recreant priest, next was Colonel de Salaberry, who bore a name honoured by millions of his fellow-countrymen. On the other side stood a man whose face was then unfamiliar to all those present. This was Commissioner Donald Alexander Smith, at whose request the meeting had been summoned.

At the commencement of the meeting he requested the chairman (Mr. Bunn) to insist that all arms be laid down, and that the flag then flying (the fleur-de-lis and shamrock) should be replaced by the British ensign. No motion to this effect was made. It would, the chairman thought, "come better at an after stage." The opportunity thus lost never recurred, and the flag of the Provisional Government flew unchallenged until Colonel Wolseley's arrival eight months later.

Mr. Smith began by reading his commission, to which the signature "John Young" (afterwards Lord Lisgar) was appended.

"Who is John Young?" cried Riel contemptuously.

Mr. Smith explained that it was the name of the Governor-General. "Why, then," demanded Riel, "is it not signed 'Governor'?"

Amid constant interruptions Mr. Smith proceeded to read out the Queen's message, which had come to the Canadian Government through Lord Granville:

The Queen has heard with surprise and regret that certain misguided persons have banded together to oppose by force the entry of the future Lieutenant-Governor into our territory in Red River. Her Majesty does not mistrust the loyalty of persons in that settlement, and can only ascribe to misunderstanding or misrepresentation their opposition to a change planned for their advantage.

She relies on your Government to use every effort to explain whatever misunderstanding may have arisen—to ascertain their wants, and conciliate the goodwill of the people of the Red River Settlement. But in the meantime she authorises you to signify to them the sorrow and displeasure with which she views the unreasonable and lawless proceedings that have taken place; and her expectation that, if any parties have desires to express or complaints to make respecting their condition and prospects, they will address themselves to the Governor-General of Canada.

The Queen expects from her representative that, as he will be always ready to receive well-founded grievances, so will he exercise the power and authority she entrusts to him in the support of order and the suppression of unlawful disturbances.

At this meeting and that held the following day, the reading of every document was contested with much obstinacy.

Threats were freely used to Mr. Smith. In concluding his own remarks, he said:

> I am here to-day in the interests of Canada, but only so far as they are in accordance with the interests of this country. Under no other circumstances would I have consented to act. As to the Hudson's Bay Company, my connection with that body is, I suppose, generally known; but I will say that if it could do any possible good to this country, I would, at this moment, resign my position in that Company. I sincerely hope that my humble efforts may in some measure contribute to bring about, peaceably, union and entire accord among all classes of the people of this country.

The result of the meeting was the appointment of forty delegates, twenty from either side, to meet on January 25th, "with the object of considering the subject of Mr. Smith's commission and to decide what would be best for the welfare of the country." The English as a body and a large number of French declared their entire satisfaction with the explanations given and their earnest desire for union with Canada.

On the 22nd President Riel had several conferences within the fort with the well-affected Métis; he shed tears freely, and told them how earnestly he desired an arrangement with Canada. He assured them that he would lay down his authority immediately on the meeting of the Convention. They believed him sincere, and, although Mr. Smith considered that their precautions should not be diminished, it was considered that ten men would be amply sufficient to leave while they went to conduct the elections. The consequence was that they had hardly gone when repressive measures were resorted to, and the Hudson's Bay stores, which until now had only partially been in their hands, were taken complete possession of by Riel.

The following is a letter from Mr. Donald A. Smith to the Hon. J. Howe:

Photo: Topley, Ottawa

SIR JOHN A. MACDONALD.

Letter to Joseph Howe

FORT GARRY,
January 25, 1870.

SIR,—Up to this date I have not deemed it advisable to address you officially in my capacity as Commissioner from the Canadian Government with reference to the affairs of the Red River Settlement.

With regard to matters which transpired from the date of my arrival here, the 27th ultimo until the 14th inst., little need be said. In explanation of what follows, it will be necessary that I inform you that I brought with me into the Territory neither my letter of authorisation or any other official documents delivered to me in Ottawa, as I wished only to express myself in the first instance merely as an officer of the Hudson's Bay Company, and to be in a position to say in good faith that I was in possession of no papers bearing on the subject which has caused so much excitement in the settlement for some months back.

This assurance I gave to Mr. Riel and his Council immediately on my arrival; but at the same time intimated to him in a perfectly straightforward manner that if the people were willing to receive me as a Commissioner from Canada, I would be able to appear before them in that position in a short time. Mr. Riel and party requested me to take an oath that I would take no active steps to restore the Government of the Hudson's Bay Company, or to effect the transfer to Canada, and on peremptorily declining this they accepted my terms on honour that I would not take steps to upset them until I had advised them of my intention to the contrary.

Some days later they declined to receive me as a Commissioner, and matters remained in this condition till the evening of the 14th inst., when Mr. Riel called on me and said that he carried no enmity, and after some conversation between us it was agreed that I should be accepted as a Commissioner. I immediately took steps to have my official papers brought in from Pembina, but in the meantime a party of French-Canadians and French half-breeds, being under the impression that Mr. Riel's object was to secure and retain or destroy these documents, resolved to intercept the messenger. They acted accordingly, and on the 18th arrived in the fort and delivered the papers into my hands, and insisted that I should at once make known their contents, that the people might become informed of the intention of the Dominion Government.

Mr. Riel protested against the information being made public, and I also advised delay until a full attendance of all classes concerned could be obtained. It was ultimately arranged that a meeting of the inhabitants should be convened for the following day, the 19th. A strong party of French remained in the Hudson's Bay

Company's House within the fort, which still remained in possession of Mr. Riel's party, to insure against the seizure of the papers. At noon on the 19th upwards of 1,000 people—French and English—assembled within the fort, and after much protest on the part of Riel and his friends, my letter of authorisation and several other documents were read by me to the people. At a late hour the meeting was adjourned until the following day, and the reading of the papers was then continued. At one time armed men appeared on the ground, and threats were freely used to me personally and to some other individuals, but this simply with a view to preventing the information coming to the public.

Ultimately a resolution was carried unanimously that forty delegates, twenty from either side, should be elected to meet in the Court House to-day, with the object of "considering the subject of Mr. Smith's commission," and to decide what would be best for the welfare of the country. These delegates are now in session, and I expect every moment to be invited to meet them. What the result of the meeting may be it is impossible to say, but it is believed on all hands that the publicity given to the views of the Canadian Government in the action already taken will be productive of good.—I have the honour to be, sir, your obedient servant,

DON. A. SMITH.

The Convention resumed its sessions on the 25th and continued till February 10th. On the 27th Commissioner Smith attended the Convention by appointment, and was received with much cordiality by all the delegates. He explained to them the view of the Canadian Government, and gave assurances that on entering Confederation they would be secured in the possession of all rights, privileges, and immunities enjoyed by British subjects in other parts of the Dominion.

"My belief," he said at the Convention, according to the *New Nation,* February 11th, "is that the Canadian Government has no intention of imposing on the North-West Territory the payment of any portion of the £300,000; and I have so much confidence that they will be actuated, in every respect, by wise and just motives that, in arranging for the distribution of the public debt of Canada, the North-West Territory will not be held liable for anything unfair; in short, that here, as in every other particular, substantial

justice will be done. Having gone through the articles, may I now be permitted to say a few words ? Your list is not only long, but contains many things of great importance. In coming here first I had no idea of it, nor had the Canadian Government. However, I was authorised by them, as Commissioner, to do what, in my judgment, might appear best in the state of public affairs here. It was thought at the time that there might be some points raised with which I could not deal personally with any satisfaction to the people of the country. This being the case, and looking at the suggestion put forward by the Very Rev. the Grand Vicar with reference to a delegation from this country to Canada, I have now, on the part of the Dominion Government and as authorised by them, to invite a delegation of the residents of Red River to meet and confer with them at Ottawa—a delegation of two or more of the residents of Red River, as they may think best; the delegation to confer with the Government and Legislature and explain the wants and wishes of the Red River people, as well as to discuss and arrange for the representation of the country in Parliament. I feel that, this being the case, it is less necessary for me to deal very particularly with these matters. On the part of the Government I am authorised to offer a very cordial reception to the delegates who may be sent from this country to Canada. I myself feel confident that the result will be such as will be entirely satisfactory to the people of the North-West. I know the desire of the Canadian Government is that it should be so."

On being requested by Mr. Riel to give an opinion regarding a " List of Rights " prepared by his party in the previous December, he declined to do so, thinking it better that the present Convention should place in his hands a paper stating their wishes, to which he would give such answers as he believed would be in accordance with the views of the Canadian Government. The Convention then set about the task of preparing a " List of Rights " embody-

ing the conditions on which they would be willing to enter Confederation.

While the discussion regarding this list was going on, Mr. Riel called on Mr. Smith and asked if the Canadian Government would consent to receive them as a Province. His reply was that he could not speak with any degree of certainty on the subject, as it had not been referred to when he was at Ottawa, the intention then being that the North-West should, in the first instance, be incorporated under the Dominion as a Territory; but, he added, no doubt it would become a Province within two or three years.

On this Mr. Riel, with much emphasis, exclaimed, " Then the Hudson's Bay Company is not safe yet." Mr. Smith answered: " Mr. Riel, that cannot influence me in the slightest degree, and I am quite prepared to act as may be required of me in my capacity as Canadian Commissioner." On the following day (February 4th) the proposition to enter as a Province was negatived by the Convention, and on the 5th another motion, directed against the Hudson's Bay Company, also failed, " the language used by Mr. Riel on the latter occasion having been violent in the extreme." The same evening Riel proceeded to Governor Mactavish, who had been dangerously ill for many weeks past and was then barely able to sit up, placed a guard over him and, heaping reproaches and insult on him, declared that he would have him shot before midnight.

Riel then sought out Dr. Cowan, the officer in immediate charge of Red River district, upbraided him for his persistent opposition to " the people," the insurgents, and declaring that his name would go down with infamy to posterity for the part he had taken, demanded that he would immediately swear allegiance to the Provisional Government or prepare for death within three hours, giving him a quarter of an hour for consideration. The doctor immediately replied that he knew no legal authority in the country but that of Great Britain, to which his allegiance was due, and

that he would not take the oath required of him. He was then seized and put in confinement along with the prisoners taken in December last. Mr. Smith was also put under strict guard, but not removed from the house.

Notwithstanding this and the painful doubt created in the minds of the English members of the Convention as to the course they should pursue after these arrests, the delegates met on the 7th, but evidently from this date they felt that they were entirely in the hands of Riel and his friends. On the 5th they had resolved to place in Mr. Smith's hands the List of Rights they had drawn up. This was done at eleven o'clock on the 7th, with an intimation that the Convention would be glad to meet the Commissioner at one o'clock p.m., the intervening two hours being allowed him to frame his answers. In drawing up these he was allowed no reference to any document, either written or printed, except the List of Rights, and a guard stood over him to see that he should write nothing else than that to be presented to the Convention. He had just finished writing when Mr. Riel and his "Adjutant-General" Lépine, who was also a member of the Convention, came in, and Riel, looking at the latter in a significant manner, said: "The answers to the List of Rights must simply be 'yes' or 'no.'" Mr. Smith said he thought otherwise, and on returning to the room a few minutes later found there Mr. Riel, the Rev. Mr. Thibault, and Colonel de Salaberry. The party proceeded together to the Convention, and in course of conversation Colonel de Salaberry told Mr. Smith he would gladly have come to see him before, but could not, as he "had been a prisoner throughout."

On February 12th Mr. Smith wrote to the Hon. Joseph Howe:

FORT GARRY.

SIR,—I send you to-day the *New Nation* newspaper of the 11th inst., containing the proceedings of the Convention of Delegates since the date of the last letter I had the honour of addressing you.

The part taken by me in the proceedings referred to is pretty correctly reported, and I trust it may be satisfactory to your Government, and, if not quite what it ought to be, some allowance may perhaps be made for the very exceptional circumstances under which my answers were drawn up, only two hours having been allowed me for the purpose, while I had to write under the eye of a guard, who received instructions in my presence from Mr. Riel not to permit any communication with me while I was thus occupied, and to see further that I should write nothing else than might appear on the sheets then before me, and which were not to be removed from the table.

After giving my views as to what the Government would be willing to concede to the people of this settlement, I intimated to the Convention that I had been authorised to invite a delegation of at least two residents to proceed to Ottawa for the purpose of conferring with the Dominion Government as to the affairs of this country, and on the 8th inst. a new resolution of the Convention was handed me, copy of which I now beg to enclose. The gentlemen nominated as delegates are John Black, Esq., Judge, Rev. Mr. Ritchot, and Mr. Alfred H. Scott, clerk to Mr. McKenny, and I presume they will leave for Canada in course of the ensuing week. I may probably precede them by a few days, if at all possible to get away so soon.

While I write, Mr. Riel has called on Dr. Cowan, the Hudson's Bay Company officer in immediate charge, to intimate that we must, at once, that is this afternoon, leave this house in which we now reside, and in view of this you will readily excuse me for closing somewhat abruptly.—I have the honour to be, sir, your obedient servant,

DON. A. SMITH.

A large majority of the delegates expressed entire satisfaction with the Commissioner's answers to their List of Rights, and professed confidence in the Canadian Government, to which he invited them to send delegates with the view to effecting a speedy transfer of the territory to the Dominion, an invitation received with acclamation and unanimously accepted. The delegates named were John Black, Esq., Recorder, the Rev. Mr. Ritchot, and Mr. Alfred H. Scott. Considerable opposition—which, however, proved ineffectual—was offered to the election of the last named.

The proceedings of the Convention terminated on Feb-

ruary 10th by the nomination of a Provisional Government, in the formation of which several delegates declined to take any part.

Governor Mactavish and Dr. Cowan and other persons were then released, and the Hudson's Bay Company's officers again allowed to come and go at pleasure; but Commissioner Smith was still confined to the fort. Riel stated expressly to Judge Black that he was apprehensive of his influence with the people in the approaching election.

At this juncture occurred a most unhappy circumstance.

On the nights of February 14th and 15th some 80 or 100 men from Portage la Prairie, a prominent post lying between the Red River and Lake Winnipegosis, a great lake only second in size in the district to Winnipeg, to which it is parallel, passed down close to Fort Garry, where they were joined by from 300 to 350 men, principally English half-breeds from the lower parts of the settlement. Had these men, properly armed and organised, been prepared to support the well-affected French party, when the latter took action about the middle of January, or even in the middle of February, during the sitting of the Convention, order might have been restored, and the transfer to Canada provided for without the necessity of firing a single shot; but now the rising was not only rash but purposeless, as without its intervention the prisoners would unquestionably have been released. The party was entirely unorganised, indifferently armed, unprovided with food, even for one meal, and wholly incapable of coping with the French, now reunited. To the number of at least 700, the French were prepared to offer the most determined resistance, which, as they were in possession of a number of guns (six- and three-pounders), ample stores of ammunition, provisions, and every other requisite, they could have done most effectually.

Mr. Smith stated that his sympathies were, in great measure, with the Portage men, whom he believed to have been actuated by the best of motives; but under the circum-

stances it was not difficult to foresee that the issue could not be otherwise than disastrous to their cause. The attempt was therefore to be deplored, as it resulted in placing the whole Settlement at the feet of Riel.

By the great majority of settlers, English and Scotch, the movement was deprecated. However, forty-seven of the party—including Captain Boulton and Thomas Scott—were captured on their way home while passing within a few yards of the fort. It was said that their reason for taking so dangerous a route, instead of making a detour which would have ensured safety, was a supposed promise by Riel that they would be permitted to pass unmolested. Riel, on being asked beforehand if the party would be permitted to pass, was silent; and only on being informed that they intended next day to use the route just outside the town, remarked, "Ah, that is good!"

"For his purpose," the Commissioner grimly remarked, "no doubt it was so."

"Captain Boulton," he wrote, "was the leader of the party, and he and his friends at the Portage assured me that he exerted himself to the utmost to keep them from rising, and only joined them at the last moment when he saw they were determined to go forward. He was captured on the 17th, tried by court-martial, and condemned to be shot at noon on the following day; but at the intercession of the Lord Bishop of Rupert's Land, Archdeacon McLean, and, in short, of every influential man among the English, and, I have been told, also at the earnest entreaty of the Roman Catholic clergy, the execution was delayed till midnight of Saturday the 19th. Further than this, Riel declared that he could not, would not yield.

"Archdeacon McLean had been in close attendance on Captain Boulton for twenty-four hours, had administered to him the Sacrament, received his last commands, and had promised to be present with him at the last moment; and when I met the Archdeacon on my way to see Riel, about

eight o'clock on the evening of the 19th, he was deeply affected, and had given up all hope.

"I found with Riel Mr. H. N. Robinson of the *New Nation* newspaper; and shortly afterwards Mr. James Ross, Chief Justice, entered, followed by Mr. Bannatyne, Postmaster, who had been ordered to bring the key of the mail-bag, which Riel opened, and examining the letters, perused and retained one or more.

"Mr. Ross pleaded for Boulton, but was repulsed in the most contemptuous manner. I had already been speaking to Riel on the subject when interrupted by Mr. Ross's entrance, and now resumed the conversation. Riel was obdurate, and said that the English settlers and Canadians, but more especially the latter, had laughed at and despised the French half-breeds, believing that they would not dare to take the life of anyone, and that under these circumstances it would be impossible to have peace and establish order in the country. An example must therefore be made, and he had firmly resolved that Boulton's execution should be carried out, bitterly as he deplored the necessity for doing so.

"I reasoned with him long and earnestly, until at length, about ten o'clock, he yielded, and addressing me, apparently with much feeling, said:

"'Hitherto I have been deaf to all entreaties, and in now granting you this man's life, may I ask a favour?'

"'Anything,' I replied, 'that in honour I can do.'

"'Canada has disunited us,' he continued; 'will you use your influence to unite us? You can do this, and without this it must be war—bloody civil war!'

"My answer was to repeat what I said on first entering Red River—'I am ready to give my whole heart to effect a peaceful union of the country with Canada.'

"'We only want our just rights as British subjects,' Riel went on, 'and we want the English to join us simply to get these.'

"'Then,' I remarked, 'I shall at once see them and induce them to go on with the election of delegates for that purpose.'

"'If you can do this,' he replied, 'war will be avoided. Not only the lives but the liberties of all the prisoners will be secured, for on your success depend the lives of all the Canadians in the country.'"

Riel immediately proceeded to the prison and intimated to Archdeacon McLean that he had been induced by Mr. Smith to spare Captain Boulton's life, and had further promised that immediately on the meeting of the Council shortly to be elected the whole of the prisoners should be released. At the same time he requested the Archdeacon to explain these circumstances to Captain Boulton and the other prisoners.

The moment was a critical one for the settlement. Every man's life was in the hands of Riel, and fully appreciating the significance of this, the Bishop of Rupert's Land, and the Protestant clergy generally, now earnestly counselled the people to elect their delegates without loss of time, as by this means they might to some extent control the course of events, while otherwise they were entirely powerless.

In a letter to Mr. Smith, dated February 20th, 1870, Mr. Ross said:

> DEAR SIR,—On further consideration, I am satisfied that the mission projected for to-day will be much more successful if you alone undertake it. My course at the Convention, which the people below highly disapproved of as being too friendly to the French, would not only render valueless anything I might urge, but perhaps even help to intensify the feeling against union. So satisfied am I of this that in the public interest I must refrain from taking part in the mission.—I am, sir, yours faithfully,
>
> JAMES ROSS.

Archdeacon McLean having offered to accompany Mr. Smith, they visited the different parts of the Settlement, and found that in several parishes the people, and those most

loyal to the British Crown and most desirous for union with Canada, had already chosen their councillors.

Mr. Smith explained to all that the Council was intended expressly for effecting the transference of the country to Canada, and for ensuring the safety of life and property in the meantime.

In some instances he found that they had drawn up petitions to Mr. Riel as "President," expressing submission, etc. These he requested them to destroy, advising that nothing more should be done than under the circumstances was absolutely necessary, namely, that having made their election, they should simply intimate the fact to the Secretary of the Council, and not to Mr. Riel. The elections in the English parishes having taken place on February 26th, he again saw Riel, who reassured him that all the prisoners would be released within a day or two after the first meeting of the Council. On the 28th he again sent for him, and repeated his promise that the lives of the prisoners were secure and that their release would shortly follow.

"I had no further communication with Riel," continued Mr. Smith, "until Monday, March 4th, when about ten o'clock in the morning Père Lestanc called on me. He informed me of Bishop (afterwards Archbishop) Taché's expected arrival—not later certainly than the 8th, and probably some days earlier—adding that his lordship had telegraphed to request that if about to leave for Canada I would defer my departure till he could communicate personally with me. He (Père Lestanc) then said that the 'conduct of the prisoners was very unsatisfactory, that they were unruly, insolent to the "soldiers," and their behaviour altogether so very bad that he was afraid the guards might be forced to retaliate in self-defence.'

"I expressed much surprise at the information he gave, as the prisoners, without exception, had promised to Archdeacon McLean and myself that, seeing their helpless posi-

tion, they would endeavour to act so as to avoid giving offence to their guards, and we encouraged them to look forward to be speedily released in fulfilment of the promise made by Mr. Riel. . . .

"About eleven o'clock Père Lestanc left me and went upstairs to communicate to Governor Mactavish what he termed 'the good news that Bishop Taché was expected so soon.' The Rev. Mr. Young, Methodist clergyman, had just entered the house, and meeting the Père in the hall, conversed with him for a few minutes. Mr. Young then came up to me, and from him I had the first intimation that it was intended to shoot Thomas Scott (a leader in the Portage la Prairie rising), and that the sentence was to be carried into effect at twelve o'clock noon that day. We agreed in believing that this thing was too monstrous to be possible, and Mr. Young said that poor Scott himself was equally incredulous on the subject, thinking they merely intended to frighten him.

"However, even to keep him in suspense was a horrible cruelty, and it was arranged that as Mr. Young had been sent for to attend the man, he should see Riel, ascertain exactly how the matter stood, and if really serious let me know at once. Mr. Young accordingly called on Riel, was informed that Scott had been condemned, that the sentence was irrevocable, and would not be delayed one minute beyond noon. Mr. Young begged for delay, saying 'the man was not prepared to die'; but all without avail. He was paralysed with horror, returned to the prisoner, and immediately sent a messenger to inform me of the result of his visit.

"I determined to find out Riel immediately, but recollecting that Père Lestanc was still upstairs with Mr. Mactavish, went to him, related what I had heard, and asked him if he knew anything about the matter. His answer . . . was to the effect that they had seen Mr. Riel . . . and had all spoken to him about it; by which I understood that they

had interceded for Scott. Governor Mactavish was greatly shocked on being informed of Riel's purpose and joined in reprobating it.

"Père Lestanc consented to accompany me, and we called on Riel. When we entered he asked me, 'What news from Canada?' The mail had arrived on the preceding day, and I replied, 'Only the intelligence that Bishop Taché will be here very soon.' I then mentioned what I had heard regarding Scott, and before Riel answered, Père Lestanc interposed in French words meaning, 'Is there no way of escape?' Riel replied to him, 'My Rev. Père, you know exactly how the matter stands'; then turning to me he said, 'I will explain to you,' speaking at first in English, but shortly after using the French, remarking to me, 'You understand that language?'

"He said in substance that Scott had been throughout a dangerous character, had been the ringleader in a rising against Mr. Snow, who had charge of the party employed by the Canadian Government, during the preceding summer, in road-making; that he had risen against the 'Provisional Government' in December last; that his life was then spared; that he escaped, had again been taken in arms, and once more pardoned (referring, no doubt, to the promise he had made to me that the lives and liberty of all the prisoners were secured); but that he was incorrigible and quite incapable of appreciating the clemency with which he had been treated; that he was rough and abusive to the guards, and insulting to him, Mr. Riel; that his example had been productive of the very worst effects on the other prisoners, who had become insubordinate to such an extent that it was difficult to withhold the guards from retaliating.

"He further said, 'I sat down with Scott as we are doing now, and asked him truthfully to tell me—as I would not use his statement against him—what he and the Portage people intended to have done with me had they succeeded in capturing me,' to which he replied, 'We intended to keep

you as a hostage for the safety of the prisoners.' I argued with Riel, and endeavoured to show that some of the circumstances he had mentioned, and especially the last, were very strong reasons to urge why Scott's life should not be sacrificed, and that if, as he represented, Scott was a rash, thoughtless man, whom none cared to have anything to do with, no evil need be apprehended from his example. I pointed out that the one great merit claimed for the insurrection was that it had been bloodless; I implored him not now to stain it, not to burden it with what would be considered a horrible crime.

" ' We must make Canada respect us ! ' he exclaimed.

" ' She has every proper respect for the people of the Red River,' I replied, ' and this is shown in her having sent Commissioners to treat with them.'

" I told him I had seen the prisoners some time back, when they commissioned me to say to their friends at Portage that they desired peace, and I offered to go to them again and reason with them should that be necessary. On this he said :

" ' Look here, Mr. Smith, I sent a representative to see the prisoners, and when he asked them whom they would vote for as councillors outside their own body, Thomas Scott came forward and said, " Boys, have nothing to do with those Americans." '

" When I remarked that this was a most trifling affair, and should not have been repeated, Riel said, ' Do not attempt to prejudice us against the Americans; for although we have not been with them, they are with us, and have been better friends to us than the Canadians.'

" Further argument, entreaty, and protest alike failed to divert Riel from his purpose. He put an end to the interview by saying :

" ' I have done three good things since I commenced : I have spared Boulton's life at your instance, and I do not regret it, for he's a fine fellow; I pardoned another one,

and he showed his gratitude by escaping, but I don't grudge him his miserable life; and now I shall shoot Scott.' "

At this point the Adjutant-General, Lépine, entered. He was president of the council of seven which tried Scott, five of whom, according to Riel, " with tears streaming from their eyes, condemned him as worthy of death," a sentence which he had confirmed. In answer to Riel the Adjutant said, " Scott must die." Riel then requested Père Lestanc to order the people on their knees for prayer, as it might benefit the condemned man's soul.

Referring to Père Lestanc, and making a final appeal, Mr. Smith retired.

On entering the Governor's house within a few minutes of one o'clock, the Rev. Mr. Young joined him and said, " It is now considerably past the hour; I trust you have succeeded."

" No," was the reply; " for God's sake go back at once to the poor man, for I fear the worst."

The worthy clergyman left immediately, and a few minutes after entering the room in which the prisoner was confined some guards marched in and told Scott that his hour had come. Not until then did the reality of his position flash upon the condemned man. He said good-bye to the other prisoners, was led outside the gate of the fort with a white handkerchief covering his head; his coffin having a piece of white cotton thrown over it, followed.

His eyes were then bandaged; he continued in prayer, in which he had been engaged on the way, for a few minutes. He asked Mr. Young how he should place himself, whether standing or kneeling; then knelt in the snow, said farewell, and immediately fell back, pierced by three bullets. The firing party consisted of six men, all of whom, it is said, were more or less intoxicated. It has been further stated that only three of the muskets were loaded with ball cartridge, and that one man did not discharge his piece. Mr. Young turned aside when the first shots were fired, then

went back to the body, and again retired for a moment, while a man discharged his revolver at the sufferer, the ball, it is said, entering the eye and passing round the head.

The wounded man groaned between the time of receiving the musket shots and the discharge of the revolver. Mr. Young asked to have the remains for interment in the burying-ground of the Presbyterian Church, but this was not acceded to, and a similar request, preferred by the Bishop of Rupert's Land, was also refused. He was buried within the walls of the fort.

It is said that on descending the steps leading from the prison poor Scott, addressing Mr. Young, said, "This is a cold-blooded murder," then he engaged in prayer, and was so occupied until he was shot.

"After this date," reported Mr. Smith, "I held no communication whatsoever with Riel, except in reference to getting away from the country, which I was not allowed to leave without a pass. I felt that under the circumstances it was not desirable that I should remain longer at Red River, but it was not until a fortnight later that Riel gave permission for my departure."

In his own words, "although not accomplishing all that could be desired," Commissioner Smith's visit to Fort Garry was productive of far more good than was realised at the time. He had created a Canadian party amongst the half-breeds, who would have made their influence felt but for Captain Boulton's unhappy and ill-timed rising in February. Coming at a critical moment this turned the scale; the shooting of Scott was a sequence. Of that rising Mr. Smith magnanimously wrote that, "though rash and productive of results the most unfortunate, I can hardly blame, knowing, as already stated, that those who took part in it were actuated and impelled by generous motives."

Yet to Sir Stafford Northcote he avowed, as a quarter of a century later in South Africa Cecil Rhodes similarly avowed of a trusted partisan:

Thomas Scott was shot and done to death on the fourth day of March 1870! Was in Winnipeg at the time.
K.W.F.

Official Recognition

"Boulton's act upset all my hopes."

* * * * *

Two years later the Government—having had time to consider Mr. Smith's services coolly and impartially—were moved to send him the following letter:

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE PROVINCES,
OTTAWA,
February 22, 1872.

SIR,—The conditions which led to your appointment in December, 1869, as Special Commissioner to the North-West are now matters of history; but the Governor-General feels that the important services which, in that capacity, you rendered the country have not yet received that official recognition to which they are justly entitled.

His Excellency therefore has commanded me to convey to you the expression of the appreciation of the patriotism with which you placed your services at the disposal of the Government. . . . Subsequent events have, in His Excellency's opinion, fully justified the wisdom of his selection. . . . If the serious dangers which then threatened the Settlement were happily averted, and law and order peacefully established at Fort Garry, His Excellency feels that the result was in no small degree due to the ability and discretion and firmness with which you executed your commission, and of the influence which your character and standing enabled you to command from all classes of the coummnity in the country.

I am, Sir, your most obedient servant,

J. HOWE.

CHAPTER XI

THE DOWNFALL OF RIEL (1870)

THE Colonial Under-Secretary, Sir Frederick Rogers, had in January written to Sir S. Northcote, Governor of the Hudson's Bay Company, advising him that the Government was hoping for the best results from the sending of Mr. Donald A. Smith as a Special Commissioner.

From his position as an officer of the Company, the Canadian Ministry anticipated that he would obtain ready access to Fort Garry, and that he would be able to strengthen the hands of Governor Mactavish and arrange with the loyal and well-affected portion of the people for a restoration of order. Also, they expressed their confident hope that these measures would succeed; but, in case of failure, the Ministry was already making preparations for sending a military force in the early spring.[1]

In his letter to Sir Stafford Northcote, Sir Frederick Rogers said:

> Lord Granville desires me to add that the reasons given by the Canadian Government for delaying the transfer, weighty in themselves, become practically conclusive when it is considered that Her Majesty's Government and the Hudson's Bay Company must alike look to that Government for the practical accomplishment of the transfer, and that they appear, in fact, to be conducting it in the spirit which Her Majesty's Government approve, and which is most calculated to avoid that injury to the trade of the Company, which Mr. Mactavish anticipated from any violent measures.
>
> His Lordship believes that a short delay in the completion of the

[1] In his private correspondence with Sir John Rose, the Canadian Premier expresses himself less confidently. "By the middle of January we may expect to hear from Donald Smith, the Hudson's Bay man, and from Mr. Thibault; but as I fear they will be unsuccessful, we must at once address ourselves to preparations for the spring."—Pope, *Memoirs of Sir J. A. Macdonald.*

contract, however in itself inconvenient, may be more than compensated by ensuring that the surrender is finally affected with the full consent and agreement of both parties interested.

While still at Fort Garry Mr. Smith had learnt that Sir Stafford Northcote was contemplating a visit to Canada, in company with Bishop Taché. Northcote had written to his friend, Lord Granville, " What should you say to my going as Joint Commissioner with Bishop Taché to the Red River ? " Granville replied that he could not say how public-spirited he thought Sir Stafford's conduct in deciding to go out and scatter oil on the troubled waters.

" The Company," writes Lord Iddesleigh's biographer, " was nervous about its £300,000, which ought to have been paid by December 1st, but had not been paid. His reasons for going out were to see the Canadian Government and to take care of the Company's interests during the transfer."[1]

Sir Stafford Northcote duly embarked in the spring and, reaching New York, travelled westward until he met Mr. Smith returning from his mission to Red River. Northcote decided that the Company's interests were already in safe hands, and that any further efforts in pouring oil on the troubled waters might result in " setting the stream on fire."

It was a wise decision.

* * * * * *

On his way back from Fort Garry, which he quitted on March 19th, 1870, Mr. Smith for the first time encountered a personage with whom he was afterwards to be closely associated. This was Mr. James Jerome Hill, then travelling by dog-sledge to Winnipeg from St. Paul. Hill was Canadian born, in his thirty-second year, and at that time closely interested in the transportation business between the two centres.

On reaching Fort Garry, Hill had interviews with Riel, Bishop Taché, Governor Mactavish and others. They told

[1] Andrew Lang, *Life of Sir Stafford Northcote, Earl of Iddesleigh.*

him that, if strange Indians came into the country with the Canadian force, all the Indians of the North-West would unite in a fierce resistance; and that the friends of Canada especially dreaded the effects of such a policy.

Meanwhile, on March 30th, Mr. Smith arrived at St. Paul, whence he immediately dispatched telegrams to Ottawa and London. At St. Paul he learned that the greatest public interest was attached to his mission, although its character and history were not yet understood.

He reached Ottawa on April 3rd, and, after seeing Sir John Macdonald and Mr. Howe, continued on to Montreal, afterwards returning to the capital to finish his report. This was no easy task, for at Montreal not only was attention distracted by innumerable affairs connected with the Company's business, but also by matters referred to him by the Canadian Government. Indeed, the Government, its agents and emissaries, as well as numerous private and commercial interests, had come now to look to Mr. Smith for advice, and frequently for practical assistance. None the less, on April 13th he succeeded in finishing his *Report,* which he then forwarded to the Secretary of State. The latter duly acknowledged it:

PRIVY COUNCIL,
April 14.

DEAR MR. SMITH,—I have just finished reading your report, which will be placed before the Council to-morrow. Permit me, in this hasty acknowledgment, to say that, although lengthy, it is of absorbing interest and will convey to my colleagues and to the people at large the most intimate acquaintance with the truly painful situation at Red River and the character of persons and recent events there that has yet appeared.—Believe me to be, very truly yours,
J. HOWE.

On the following day, Howe again wrote:

HOUSE OF COMMONS,
Friday night.

DEAR MR. SMITH,—On reading your report I strongly advise you to omit the passages reflecting upon Messrs. Thibault and Salaberry,

especially the ones I have marked. They are both feeble persons, but I think it is of no use casting any particular discredit upon them, or even to call attention to their feebleness.—Yours faithfully,

J. Howe.

The general narrative contained in the Report I have already given. After detailing all that occurred between December 13th and March 19th, Mr. Smith continued:

Although not accomplishing all that could be desired, the mission to Red River, as I shall endeavour to show in a few words, has been productive of some good, and that it was not entirely successful may be fairly attributed to the circumstances above referred to, in connection with the action taken and meetings held in January last. *Messrs. Thibault and de Salaberry will no doubt be able fully to explain their conduct in this matter, and one reason for it may perhaps be found in the fact (for it was a fact the latter gentleman himself informed me subsequently) that they were then under close restraint and consequently in a great measure precluded from acting as they otherwise would have done. This I can readily believe, as our position at Fort Garry—and not only mine, but that of several others who acted in concert with me—was one of extreme peril, which I hope, however, we were able to disregard in our efforts to accomplish the end we so earnestly desired to attain.*[1]

He went on to say:

Success, although in a lesser degree, might also have been gained at a later period but for the rising in February, which, though rash and productive of results the most unfortunate, I can hardly blame, knowing, as already stated, that those who took part in it were actuated and impelled by generous motives. On reaching Red River in December last, I found the English-speaking portion of the inhabitants greatly divided in opinion as to the comparative advantages of union with Canada and the formation of a Crown Colony, while a few—a very small number—favoured annexation to the United States. The explanations offered on the part of Canada they received as satisfactory, and with hardly a dissentient voice they would now vote for the immediate transfer to the Dominion. They earnestly requested me to assure His Excellency the Governor-General of their warm loyalty to the British Crown.

The case is difficult as regards the French half-breeds. A not inconsiderable number of them remained true to their allegiance during all the troubles through which they have had to pass, and

[1] The passage in italics is one of those to which Hon. J. Howe took exception.

with these will now be found associated many others whose minds had for a time been poisoned by gross misrepresentations made by designing men for their own selfish ends. A knowledge of the true state of the case and of the advantages they would derive from union with Canada had been carefully kept from them, and they were told to judge of Canadians generally by the acts and bearing of some of the less reflective immigrants who had denounced them as "cumberers of the ground," who must speedily make way for the "superior race" about to pour in upon them.

It is also true that in the unauthorised proceedings of some of the recent Canadian arrivals some plausible ground had been given for the feeling of jealousy and alarm with which the contemplated change of government was regarded by the native population. In various localities these adventurers had been industriously marking off for themselves considerable and, in some ways, very extensive and exceptionally valuable tracts of land, thereby impressing the minds of the people with the belief that the time had come when in their own country they were to be entirely supplanted by the stranger, *and that a spirit of avarice and selfishness was to rule the new order of things* —a belief, however, which I have no doubt might have been completely precluded by the prevention of all such operations until Canada had unfolded her policy and shown the groundlessness of these fears.

Let us further bear in mind that many of the Catholic clergymen in the country are not French-Canadians, but Frenchmen, and consequently, it may be presumed, not very conversant with British laws and institutions and with the liberty and privileges enjoyed under them. Warmly attached to their flocks, they deemed it necessary to exact some guarantee that in their new political condition they would not be treated with injustice. It is unnecessary here to point out how the breach widened, until at length it attained a magnitude and significance little dreamt of in the commencement, even by those who joined most heartily in the movement. It is far more pleasing to be able to state—which I do with much confidence —that a large majority of the French party have no misgivings as to union with Canada, and that, joined by and under the guidance of his lordship, Bishop Taché, and other members of the clergy who enjoy their confidence, they will shortly prove themselves to be staunch supporters of the Dominion, firm in their allegiance to England.

In the course of the insurrection one deplorable crime and many grossly illegal acts have unquestionably been committed, but it would be alike impolitic and unjust to charge them to the French population

generally, *and while Britain will not fail to punish those who have wilfully sacrificed life, I feel assured the people of Canada will not be less ready to act in a liberal and forgiving spirit even towards such as have erred deeply, but not intentionally.*

Much obloquy has been heaped on the Hudson's Bay Company and their Governor and officers in the North-West, which I consider it unnecessary at this moment even to attempt to answer or refute, although not doubting that both could be readily and satisfactorily done. Errors, many and grave, have, it cannot be denied, been committed on all sides, but wilful and intentional neglect of duty cannot, I feel convinced, be laid to the charge either of the Hudson's Bay Company or their representatives in the country. Personally, I have been entirely unconnected with the administration of affairs in that department.

I would respectfully submit that it is of the utmost importance there should be a strong military force in the North-West as early as practicable.[1] The minds of the Indians—especially the tribes of the Saskatchewan country—have been so perplexed and confused by the occurrences of the past six months that it would be very unsafe to trust to their forbearance; and, indeed, until the question of Indian claims has been finally settled, it would not, in my opinion, be prudent to leave the country unprotected by military. The adjustment of those claims will require early attention, and some memoranda and evidence in my hands on the subject I shall, if desired, be prepared to lay before the Government.

Long afterwards, when the Riel insurrection was under discussion in the House of Commons, he said:

The mission on which I went at that time was a most delicate and difficult one. It was one of no ordinary difficulty, and I felt the great responsibility at the time. I felt that the part I had to act was that of a mediator, and I believe that was the desire of the Government at Ottawa. It was not to raise up strife and bad feeling, but to assure them that they would be received into the Dominion on equitable, liberal terms, and to endeavour to keep the settlement quiet and peaceable until such time as the Canadian Government would be able to send a force into the country. This I endeavoured to carry out. Not only would one rash or unguarded word have increased the difficulty, but even the pointing of a finger might, on more than one occasion, have been sufficient to put the whole country into a flame. The hon. member for Lisgar can well imagine what it would have

[1] From this recommendation sprang later the North-West Mounted Police.

been in such a country had the people once come in collision with each other. No one more than myself regrets what passed at that time in Manitoba. No one can deplore more than I do that one life should have been lost there; but I have often since returned thanks most fervently that it was not a thousandfold worse under the circumstances. I believe, had a different course been pursued, instead of us having to deplore the loss of three lives, we would have seen the destruction of hundreds—perhaps of a quarter or a half of the whole population. So that, while what did happen was greatly to be deplored, we have cause to be thankful that something very much worse did not happen.

There could be but one opinion as to the ability displayed in Mr. Smith's *Report*. The extraordinary vividness with which the whole situation was laid bare was especially commented upon. It was read everywhere, both in Canada and Britain, with avidity. Many years later, Lord Rowton told its author that Mr. Disraeli kept it on his table for weeks, mentioning it frequently to visitors as one of the most interesting official reports he had read "since Durham's day." To Lord Granville this "full and valuable account of matters connected with the disturbances at Red River" was especially welcome.[1]

Even in Winnipeg itself, as the difficulties became known, tributes began speedily to appear from those best qualified to judge. Amongst these was the Reverend Mr. Young, the single-minded and upright clergyman who had administered the last rites to Thomas Scott. Mr. Young expressed his gratitude for Mr. Smith's "earnest efforts in behalf of the liberty and lives of the imperilled Loyalists."

Throughout Canada, and particularly in Ontario, the shooting of Scott, as soon as the circumstances became known, caused the greatest excitement. Nothing that could be done to inflame the people was neglected. Public meetings were held in several cities at which protests were made against the Government's granting any rights or privileges

[1] Letter to Sir John Young, May 31st.

to the "murderous" half-breeds. In the midst of this popular tumult, two of the delegates, Rev. Mr. Ritchot and Alfred H. Scott, who had been appointed by the Red River Convention, arrived in Ottawa.

Then a thing happened which was unfortunate in the extreme. The delegates, on an affidavit sworn by the brother of Riel's victim, were promptly arrested, and haled as malefactors before a police magistrate.

There had been blunders enough already: neither the Imperial nor the Canadian Governments intended that another should be committed. The indictment was squashed and the delegates released.

On April 26th the Hon. Joseph Howe, Secretary of State, thus replied to their request for an audience:

OTTAWA,
April 26, 1870.

GENTLEMEN,—I have to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 22nd inst., announcing that as delegates of the North-West to the Government of the Dominion of Canada you desired as soon as possible to have an audience with the Government; and in reply I have informed you that the Hon. Sir John Macdonald and the Hon. Sir George Cartier have been authorised by the Government to treat with you on the subject of your mission, and they will be ready to receive you at 11 o'clock.—I have the honour to be, gentlemen, your very obedient servant,

JOSEPH HOWE.

To REV. J. N. RITCHOT,
JOHN BLACK,
A. H. SCOTT, } *Esquires.*

The first condition of the treaty proposed by the delegates of the North-West was that, "after the arrangements a general amnesty should be proclaimed of necessity in the North-West before Canada took possession of these territories." Sir George Cartier's answer was that there was no power in the Government to grant the amnesty, that it was an Imperial matter solely in consequence of the state of the title to the Territory at that time. He told the delegates that this matter being, of course, an Imperial matter,

he had no doubt that the subject would be taken up in England, and that he was warranted in saying so by the fact of the anxiety which the Imperial Government had shown to bring about a settlement of the difficulties in the North-West Territory.

The assistance of the delegates was now requisitioned by the Ministry in preparing an Act instituting the new Province of Manitoba. The measure was introduced into the House of Commons on May 2nd, 1870, by the Prime Minister himself. Sir Stafford Northcote and Donald A. Smith were amongst those present. Two days later the Bill was amended so as to include the considerable English settlement at Portage la Prairie. Besides this enlargement of boundaries, an increase in the grant of land reserved for the Hudson's Bay Company was announced. Several other alterations were made, and after an exciting debate, the Manitoba Act was passed.

On May 6th Mr. Smith wrote to Montreal :

> You will be shocked to learn that Sir John has been stricken down with illness and now lies, it is said, betwixt life and death. But the Bill is now in Mr. Howe's hands and is perfectly safe.[1]

Before Sir John's illness it became a question of whom to appoint as Lieutenant-Governor of the new Province. Howe suggested Donald Smith's name, and the Prime Minister spoke to Sir Stafford Northcote on the subject.[2] What Mr. Smith's own views were appear in the following to Sir Stafford Northcote :

[1] The Prime Minister suffered from a severe heart attack, which incapacitated him for months.

[2] Pope says : " The selection of a Lieutenant-Governor was a matter of some concern. One error of judgment had been committed in this regard ; another might be fatal. On his return to Ottawa in the preceding January, Mr. McDougall had tendered the resignation of his office which the Prime Minister thought it well to accept. Before all hope of a peaceable solution of the difficulty had died away, Sir John Macdonald had some idea of appointing Governor Mactavish of the Hudson's Bay Company. A little later Mr. Donald A. Smith's name occurred to him as a fit man. Subsequently, Colonel Wolseley intimated his willingness to accept the position, but the appointment of a military Governor was not considered expedient. Finally, the Premier's choice fell upon Mr. Archibald.—*Memoirs of Sir John A. Macdonald.*

Refuses a Governorship

MONTREAL,
May 9, 1870.

MY DEAR SIR STAFFORD,—I feel under great obligation to you for your letter, which I received only an hour ago. Pray believe that I had already realised the honour done me by Sir John's even thinking of my name in connection with so exalted a post; but the sacrifice of my liberty and of all my present plans which it would entail, made my rejection of it, had it been formally offered, unavoidable. I could not, as matters stand, have continued my connection with the Company without incurring opposition so *violent* as to undo any good my mission may have done. Mr. —— stands on an altogether different footing in the country.

I fear I cannot acquiesce in all your flattering expressions concerning myself and my usefulness to the Company here, but I am glad that this matter is now not likely to go any further.—Believe me, my dear Sir Stafford, very sincerely yours,

DON. A. SMITH.

At Ottawa, during this time, Sir Stafford Northcote, Mr. Howe, Sir George Cartier, and Mr. Smith were frequently together, engaged in discussing the situation. Sir Stafford was loud in his condemnation of the "shabby behaviour" of the Imperial Government. He thought the English Government should have settled all questions before the transfer to Canada, and said so quite frankly.

"Sir George Cartier came in while we were talking, and I repeated to him the substance of what had passed. He assured me that the Government, in declining to accept the transfer of the country in December, had not been influenced by any pecuniary considerations, but by others of a political character; and that amongst other things they had feared that if Canada accepted the transfer the status of the insurgents might be held to be altered, and that the United States might claim a right to recognise them as belligerents; whereas, so long as the country remained under the government of the Hudson's Bay Company, to which no objection was taken, the affair would only be regarded as a riot. I said I had no desire to question the conduct of Canada in declining to accept the transfer, or to inquire into the

motives of the Government. What the Company was concerned with was the refusal of Her Majesty's Government to accept the surrender, and I held that we had a good claim in respect of that refusal—it being for Her Majesty's Government to settle afterwards with the Government of Canada how that claim was to be met. Both the Ministers concurred that we had a good claim, and that Canada was, to some extent at all events, responsible. They said the Home Government had behaved very shabbily in the matter—a sentiment which I was not disposed to dissent from."[1]

For weeks the Government had been quietly proceeding with arrangements for sending in a military force to restore peace and order in the North-West, should other means fail. Earl Granville had, on March 5th, telegraphed to Sir John Young, the Governor-General of Canada:

> Her Majesty's Government will give proposed military assistance, provided reasonable terms are granted Red River settlers, and provided your Government enable Her Majesty's Government to proclaim the transfer of the territory simultaneously with the movement of the force.

This was agreed to, and Lieutenant-General Sir James Lindsay was placed in command of the forces. In the instructions to Sir Clinton Murdock, Earl Granville said: "Troops should not be employed in forcing the Sovereignty of Canada on the population, should they refuse to admit it." This was strictly adhered to, as the sequel will show. General Lindsay was instructed to consult with Sir John Young with regard to the selection of the force itself, and of the officer to command it. At first it was proposed to send about 250 regulars and 700 volunteers, but the number of the former was afterwards increased to nearly 400, in order to allow of small garrisons being left at Thunder Bay and Fort Francis to guard the supplies, the Dominion Government agreeing to pay the expenses of all over 250.

[1] Andrew Lang, *Life of Sir Stafford Northcote, Earl of Iddesleigh.*

Colonel Wolseley in Command

On April 23rd Earl Granville sent the following instructions to Sir John Young:

On the following conditions troops may advance:—

1. Rose to be authorised to pay £300,000 at once, and Her Majesty's Government to be at liberty to make transfer before the end of June.

2. Her Majesty's Government to pay expenses of British troops only, not exceeding 250, and Canadian Government the rest, sending at least 500 trained men.

3. Canadian Government to accept decision of Her Majesty's Government on disputed points of the Settlers' Bill of Rights.

4. Military arrangements to be to the satisfaction of General Lindsay.

Two days before the second reading of the Manitoba Bill instructions were sent, therefore, to Sir John Rose to pay over the £300,000 to the Hudson's Bay Company. This was done on the 11th, just one day before the Manitoba Act received the assent of the Governor-General. On the 6th, however, orders were sent to Sir John Young by Earl Granville that the troops might proceed.

Early in April Colonel Wolseley, then holding the post of Deputy Quartermaster-General in British North America, had been appointed to the command of the expedition. On May 4th he left Montreal for Collingwood, to inspect the preparations for the embarkation of the force at that point.

Anticipating the sending of troops into the North-West, the Canadian Government had given instructions to make arrangements for their transport from Lake Superior to Red River, and, at Mr. Smith's suggestion, an agent was also sent to maintain friendly relations with the Indians along the route. Work on the "Dawson route," as it was called, was also pushed forward as rapidly as possible, and everything was done to facilitate the passage of the troops. Provisions, wagons, horses, oxen, and provender were in readiness, and on May 3rd a steamer left Collingwood for Fort William, loaded with supplies of all kinds, and carrying a large number of *voyageurs* and workmen. This vessel

was followed in a few days by one called the *Chicora,* with further stores and men. When, however, this steamer arrived at Sault Ste. Marie, the American officials there flatly refused passage through the canal. The stores had therefore to be unloaded and portaged across to the previous steamer which had been allowed to pass through into Lake Superior. The *Chicora* then returned to Collingwood, and brought the first detachment of troops to the Sault, where the passage of the canal was again refused. On this, representations were instantly made to the American authorities at Washington by Sir John Young, through Sir Edward Thornton, the British Minister, that, the expedition being one of peace, the stores should not be stopped.

Forgotten now is this affair of the *Chicora.* At the time, however, it was very serious. Although America was permitted during the Civil War to pass armed revenue cutters through the Canadian canals, and likewise to pass American soliders in uniform and with arms over the Canadian railways, the Canadian Government had nevertheless determined to take the greatest care to avoid any extraordinary demand on the courtesy of the United States Government. Their instructions were precise—that neither troops, boats, nor warlike material of any kind should be sent through the Sault Ste. Marie Canal.

For Canadian vessels to pass through the canal was a courtesy of the most ordinary kind which had been for many years, in times of war as well as of peace, extended to American vessels passing through Canadian canals. Yet this had now been refused without inquiry or knowledge of the intentions of the Canadian Government. In no sense could the existing state of things at Red River be regarded as justifying this unusual step being taken by the American authorities. Small wonder, then, that Sir John Macdonald considered that the conduct of the American authorities was of an unfriendly character, and requested Sir John Young to communicate with the Secretary of State for the

Colonies, in order that their views on the subject of the stoppage of the steamer *Chicora* might be considered by Her Majesty's Government. A vigorous remonstrance was addressed, therefore, by the British Ambassador in Washington to Mr. Fish, the American Secretary of State.

On May 11th, Donald A. Smith wrote to Sir Stafford Northcote:

I understand that both Mr. Fish and the President explained that the incident could not have happened at a worse time, and was altogether most awkward. The anti-British element in the country claimed that our expedition was going out to Red River to crush a people who merely asked for their rights and punish their leaders, who amongst them were popular heroes. "It is notorious that the *Chicora* is carrying stores for the troops. If this is a peaceful expedition, prove it by pardoning and absolving all the members of the Provisional Government. Then we will release the *Chicora*." All this is very humiliating to us, and it is most improbable that our Government will yield merely in order to save Mr. President Grant from the animosity of the Fenians.

Mr. Smith's suspicions were well-founded. Confirmation was shortly forthcoming, as the following letter to Sir John Young will show:

WASHINGTON,
May 17, 1870.

SIR,—I have the honour to inform your Excellency that during the discussion with Mr. Fish on the passage of Canadian vessels through the Sault Ste. Marie Canal both he and, subsequently, the President expressed their conviction of the expediency of a proclamation of amnesty being issued in favour of Riel and his followers for past proceedings, and although they did not wish it to be made public that they had suggested such a measure, they thought that the United States Government would derive much help from it in inducing the people of the United States to acquiesce in Canadian vessels being allowed to pass through the Canal.

Believing that advice to Her Majesty upon the subject would come within the province of Her Majesty's Government, I have referred the suggestion to the Earl of Clarendon.—I have, etc.,

EDWD. THORNTON.

After several days of argument, President Grant thought it prudent to accept the assurances of the Canadian Govern-

ment. The following letter, therefore, was sent to Sir Edward Thornton:

DEPARTMENT OF STATE, WASHINGTON,
May 17, 1870.

SIR,—I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your note of the 11th inst., informing me that you have received a telegram from the Governor-General of Canada, stating that the Canadian steamer *Chicora*, carrying an ordinary commercial freight and no war stores, has been prevented from passing through the Sault Ste. Marie Canal, and further informing me that any difficulty which may have existed with the inhabitants of the Red River Settlement has now been amicably arranged, and that the delegates from the Convention, representing the whole population of the Fort Garry district, have acknowledged themselves well dealt with and satisfied, and that the expedition which is now being sent to the settlement will be a peaceful expedition and with the object of maintaining good order in that district, and of ensuring the regular and harmonious establishment of the new Government, and further, on behalf of the Governor-General of Canada expressing the hope that the Government of the United States will give orders that the above-mentioned canal shall remain in the same footing as regards Canadian vessels as the Welland is in regard to the vessels of the United States, there being no intention to send through the canal any munitions of war for the expedition which is about to proceed to the Red River Settlement, and that the *Chicora* and other vessels of that class may be allowed to pass through.

In reply, I have the honour to inform you that under instructions from the President the Governor of the State of Michigan has been notified by telegraph that, in consequence of your representations, the Government of the U.S. does not desire to oppose the passage of the *Chicora* and other vessels of that class through the canal in the jurisdiction of the U.S., so long as they do not carry troops and munitions of war.—I have, etc.,

J. BANCROFT DAVIS, *Acting Secretary.*

The embargo was thus removed, after much delay had been experienced, and the supplies for the troops were rapidly pushed forward to make up for lost time. The men composing the force were obliged to march across the portage and re-embark on the Lake Superior side.

At Fort Alexander, the temporary head-quarters of the

fur trade, Mr. Smith impatiently awaited the arrival of Colonel Wolseley and the troops.

On August 21st the 60th Rifles, Artillery and Engineers arrived at the fort. Mr. Smith, as chief officer in the country under the old regime, joined the expedition, with the Canadian volunteers in the rear. A start was made down the river to Lake Winnipeg, and on the 22nd the mouth of the Red River was reached. There was some uncertainty whether Riel would offer resistance to the troops, and Colonel Wolseley had to be ready for any emergency. On leaving the Stone Fort (Lower Fort Garry), therefore, a company was sent by land in advance of the troops, who remained in the boats, with orders to stop any persons going in the direction, so that intelligence of the arrival of the troops might be prevented from reaching Riel. About eight o'clock on the morning of August 23rd, 1870, Wolseley disembarked at Point Douglas, two miles north of Fort Garry.

At this point the Red River makes a sharp bend to the east, and again curving to the west, forms a projecting neck of land. This spot is famous in Red River history as the scene of the battle where the *voyageurs* and French half-breeds of the North-West Fur Company attacked the Hudson's Bay men in 1813, and put to death Governor Semple and about a score of his followers.

Where the usually abrupt bank of the Red River was less precipitous, the troops scrambled on shore. "Preceded by skirmishers and followed by a rear-guard, the little force drew near Fort Garry. There was no sign of occupation, no flag on the flag-staff, no men upon the walls; the muzzles of one or two guns showed through the bastions, but no sign of defence or resistance was visible about the place. The gate facing the north was closed, but the ordinary one, looking south upon the Assiniboine River, was found open. As the skirmish line neared the north side, two mounted men rode round the west face and

entered at a gallop through the open gateway." Riel had fled.

At the head of his troops, Colonel Wolseley marched in, the Union Jack was hoisted, a royal salute was fired, and three cheers given for the Queen, in which a number of the residents and local people there assembled joined. Thus was the "errand of peace" accomplished, and the little handful of men, after an arduous journey of 600 miles, could rest from their labours without firing a shot or having lost a life.

* * * * * *

The flight of Riel and his associates of the so-called Provisional Government, and the delay in Governor Archibald's arrival, left the Hudson's Bay Company as the only civil authority. Mr. Donald Smith was requested by Colonel Wolseley to administer affairs at Red River. For ten days Mr. Smith was *de facto* Governor and Administrator of Manitoba.

Brief as the time was, it was one of anxiety. Certain of the volunteers had come expecting to wreak vengeance, and they were angry at being baulked. Lieutenant-Governor Archibald afterwards described the position in a memorandum as follows:

> With some (I cannot say how many) of the volunteers, who went up, a desire to avenge the murder of Scott was one of the inducements to enlist. Some of them openly stated that they had taken a vow before leaving home to pay off all scores by shooting down any Frenchman who was in any way connected with the event. The great bulk of the French population having been, one way or other, concerned in the troubles, the feeling gradually grew to be one of intense dislike towards the whole race, which was heartily reciprocated by the French.
>
> When the volunteers came to be disbanded and were thus freed from all restraint, the hatred of the two classes exhibited itself more and more. Some of the immigrants from Ontario shared the feelings of the disbanded volunteers, and acted in concert with them.

That a "wild scene of drunkenness and debauchery" followed the arrival of the troops in Winnipeg, we

have the testimony of one of the young officers of the force :

> The miserable looking village produced, as if by magic, more saloons than any city of twice its size in the States could boast of. The vilest compounds of intoxicating liquors were sold indiscriminately to everyone, and for a time it seemed as though the place had become a very pandemonium. No civil authority had been given to the commander of the expedition, and no civil power of any kind existed in the settlement. The troops alone were under control, but the populace were free to work what mischief they pleased. Men who had been forced to fly from the settlement during the reign of the rebel government now returned to their homes, and for some time it seemed probable that the sudden revulsion of feeling, unrestrained by the presence of a civil power, would lead to excesses against the late ruling faction.[1]

That this was an entirely unjust and inaccurate presentment of the case, Lieutenant-General Sir William Butler, the writer of the foregoing, afterwards himself acknowledged. There *was* a civil power, and it was recognised and respected by the resident civil population generally. The turbulence came from the faction who had travelled in the wake of the troops, or had only awaited their arrival to disclose themselves and make trouble. Acting-Governor Smith not only issued an appeal to the people but caused a force of special constables to be sworn in.

On September 2nd he was relieved by Lieutenant-Governor Archibald, on whose arrival a royal salute was fired. A few days later the new Governor held a *levée* at Fort Garry, in the house recently occupied by Governor Mactavish, and afterwards known as Government House.

Poor Mactavish! He had left Fort Garry in May, and had gone home to die. He landed at Liverpool on July 15th; but the disease had made too great headway upon his constitution, and on the same day he breathed his last.

As to William McDougall, on reaching Ottawa, he at once tendered his resignation, which was accepted, and

[1] Butler, *The Great Lone Land*, 1873.

for some months he flung himself into the task of self-defence from the aspersions of his rivals and enemies. Subsequently, remarks Sir Richard Cartwright, "he was temporarily got rid of by his being appointed Superintendent-General of Immigration in Northern Europe. His later years were passed in an enforced retirement, in which he played the part of a political Ishmael."

Much speculation was aroused by Riel's sudden flight. He was a man of courage: why did he act thus? Sir William Butler, in his account, observes: "That he meditated opposition cannot be doubted. The muskets cast away by his guard were found loaded; ammunition had been served from the magazine on the morning of the flight. But muskets and ammunition are not worth much without hands and heart to use them, and twenty hands with perhaps an aggregate of two and a half hearts among them were all he had to depend on at the last moment."

But did Riel meditate opposition? That he did not is shown in the following letter to Mr. Smith.

DAKOTAH, U.S.,
September 23, 1870.

SIR,—We can never forget the gross violation of country and property in which we have been treated. Expecting something far different from an honourable British officer, I, as the chosen head of the Provisional Government, which has administered here on behalf of the Dominion of Canada, since last November, expected to receive Colonel Wolseley and Governor Archibald at Fort Garry and formally deliver up the Government. My guards were instructed to fire a salute and the enclosed address was to have been read to the appointed Governor in token of submission to the regime of Canada, with our rights and liberties guaranteed to us. This proceeding was denied to us, and we fortunately had news of the temper of injustice animating the new coming (*sic*) and if we are said to have fled it was to save ourselves and them from bloodshed.

You have already ascertained the truth of this from your people here—namely, that we remained at our posts until the last moment, only from a sense of the duty we owed our people.—Yours respectfully,

LOUIS RIEL.

Even Butler is forced to confess: "Vain, ignorant and conceited though he (Riel) was, he seemed to have been an implicit believer in his mission; nor can it be doubted that he possessed a fair share of courage, too—courage not of the Red River type, which is a very peculiar one, but more in accordance with our European ideas of that virtue."

Mr. Smith afterwards said: "It was known that before the troops reached Red River there was a great divergence of opinion between Riel and O'Donohoe. It was well known that Riel and his friends were anxious at that time to come peaceably into Canada, but O'Donohoe took quite a different course. There was evidence to show that O'Donohoe endeavoured to keep the people from uniting with Canada, and that he used every effort to have the country annexed to the United States, and it was also well established that Riel had at that time offers from the other side of the line which he would not accede to."

On August 27th Mr. Smith received a letter from Archbishop Taché, in which the following passage occurs:

> I am told that special constables had been sworn in the name of peace, for the security and welfare of the country. I humbly beg that these constables (as well as the magistrates and justices of the peace) will not be used except to maintain the tranquillity against actual movements or disturbances, and that all and every one will refuse to act in reference to anything previous to the arrival of Her Majesty's troops in Fort Garry. I see a real danger in the gathering by you of a number of the same men you employed last winter; with the best will in the world you cannot have a fair idea of the disposition of the different sections of the population.

The men referred to were those called the "loyal French," and the Archbishop was apprehensive that as those men had assisted Mr. Smith in getting up meetings throughout the country, and in enabling him to make the explanation which he was desired by the Canadian Government to make, there would be danger of a collision. A further letter from the Archbishop, written a few days

later, was to the same effect. The warning had not been needed, for it was not Mr. Smith's intention to incur any risk of the sort. His constant presence and example at this crisis undoubtedly averted danger.

To Sir Stafford Northcote Mr. Smith wrote on September 29th :

> The greatest danger now lies in the temper of many of the volunteers, who are keen Orangemen, and who enlisted chiefly with a desire to avenge themselves upon the French for the murder of Scott. Being baulked in this by the sudden disbandment, they have remained in the country, and in concert with the Ontario settlers have evinced upon every occasion the utmost animosity against the French population generally. This sentiment is returned, and individual collisions are frequent, a spark might kindle the flames anew; but so far we have been spared any scenes of flagrant violence.

But escape from what the writer feared was narrow.

A body of French half-breeds had made a selection of a tract of land at Rivière aux Islets de Bois; some of them had made farms, or, at all events, enclosures at that place. Elsewhere there was abundance of land equally good, but the new-comers preferred this spot. They entered on that ground and staked it off, put up huts, and declared they would hold it against all comers. To give character to their occupation, they discarded the name by which the river had been known, and called it the Boyne. Naturally, the feelings of the half-breeds were outraged; it was bad enough to lose land they believed to be theirs, but in the new name they detected an insult to their religion. Property, race and creed were all to be flouted. They met in the parishes of Assiniboine and Red River, resolved to drive off the intruders. News of their intentions reached Governor Archibald, who instantly dispatched warning that if they lifted a hand or struck a blow, it was "all over with them."

The threatened collision was thus arrested, but not without risk; and, although the immediate danger was

over, the feeling of discontent remained. On this discontent O'Donohoe founded his chances.

"The leader of the raid" had been a member of the Provisional Government; the other members of that Government were in the Province outlawed for their offences, abused by one press, and thrown over by the other, and yet exercising a large influence among their own race and creed. Under the circumstances, the chances were that the French would join the enemy. I had a tough battle to fight.[1]

Shortly after the arrival of the troops an attempt was made to recover the remains of the unhappy Thomas Scott, which had been buried within the quadrangle of Fort Garry. The excavation was carried on in the presence of a large crowd, under the direction of the Rev. Mr. Young. As the hole deepened, the excitement became the more intense. When, after digging some six feet, the spade struck on a board, and when the earth was removed and disclosed a deal board shaped like a coffin, everyone held his breath. But the excitement was turned into something like disappointed rage when one of the diggers thrust his arm into the box and pronounced it empty. It was empty, excepting only the rope with which Scott's arms had been pinioned.

What had become of poor Scott's body?

Long afterwards a guard stated that before the box was buried the body was exhumed, weighted heavily with chain, and plunged through a hole in the ice.

* * * * * *

It is now my duty to advert to another and even more significant matter. It was alleged that on Colonel Wolseley's arrival, the Hudson's Bay officials immediately seized a number of incriminating documents lately in the possession of the Provisional Government and threw them into an adjacent well, and that afterwards these papers were fished up out of the well and hurriedly burnt. Concerning this incident, Mr. Smith felt called upon to furnish an explanation:

[1] Governor Archibald, *Memorandum.*

These papers were in a box belonging to an officer of the Company, Mr. Wm. H. Watt, who was removing from one district of the country to another, and who came in with the troops to Fort Garry. This box was taken hold of in the confusion which then prevailed, his clothes and other things were made away with, and the box was thrown down a well. It was necessary to have the well cleared out to get water for the troops. A fire-engine was used for the purpose, and while this was being done that box was fished up, and Mr. Watt's papers, being wet and perfectly useless, he determined to have them destroyed.

This explicit statement was sent to the *Liberal* newspaper, but after being set in type was suppressed by the editor, a Mr. Laurie, at the instance of Dr. Schultz. Years afterwards, on the floor of Parliament, Schultz, then member for Lisgar, denied not only having suppressed the letter in question, but even having had any connection with the *Liberal*. Mr. Smith thereupon communicated with Mr. Laurie, and received from him the following:

Your letter of September, 1870, to the editor of the *Liberal*, denying the Company's officers finding or destroying Provisional Government's documents, was suppressed by Mr. Schultz, the proprietor, after being set up by me as editor.

What is the truth of this affair of the destruction of documents alleged to be incriminating?

I am convinced that Lord Strathcona was perfectly ingenuous in his statement, and that he was unaware of the character of any of the letters which had been in the possession of Chief Trader Watt at Pembina, and which it was thought prudent to destroy. In 1906 I had some reason to believe that amongst these letters were many from officers of the Hudson's Bay Company, expressing themselves with too great freedom upon the events then impending or occurring. Several were letters received from Governor Mactavish and Dr. Cowan during the period when Governor McDougall was on the frontier. After a lapse of nearly half a century it can do no harm to Mactavish's memory

to publish to the world a fragment of one of these communications which was *not* destroyed.

This interesting fragment, written on azure foolscap, slightly burnt at the edges, is now in the possession of a gentleman in Montreal. It reads as follows:

. . . a most difficult one, and the circumstances are such that the late Governor could not possibly presume to give orders to Commissioned Gentlemen, who must during the present anarchy conduct the business according to their own judgment.

Privately, as one man to another, it is a question whether McDougall *should not be starved out* for his arrogance. Only I strongly advise you to risk nothing for the greedy London Directory, from whom we are not likely to receive any thanks, but who will themselves receive full compensation for the stores, etc. As for Riel, he is every day strengthening himself, and all our work-people are with him.

It is quite useless to send me any further accounts as Mr. R. has possession of all our books here, and it only adds to present confusion and future labour, inventories of losses, etc. The question of supplies to La Rose rests entirely with your discretion.

W. Mactavish.

When all is said and done, this merely proves afresh what all the world now knows, that the wintering partners were indignant at the way they had been treated, and also that the Governor of Assiniboia was human enough to resent the tone of Mr. McDougall's official *communiqués* to him.

CHAPTER XII

MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT (1870-71)

NEAR the middle of one of the western lakes of Canada, discovered by the old Canadian explorers, is a small island shunned by the red men as haunted ground. "Never," wrote one of the Company's officers, "will they approach it, much less land on it, for it is the place of Manitou-bah—'the speaking of God'—whose voice they hear nightly as they camp by the lake or guide their fishing boats over its surface." But if the superstitious Ojibway listened and avoided, piously pronouncing the name of Manitou, the inquisitive white man heard and set out to probe the mystery. It was revealed as a simple natural phenomenon—the beating of the waves on a peculiar natural shingle. Along the northern shore of the island runs a low cliff of compact, fine-grained limestone which, when the wind blows and the waters beat, clinks like steel under the stroke of the hammer. At a distance it is like the ringing of distant church bells, so that the explorer Dawson, who spent several days and nights on the island, often awoke fancying he heard chimes. The breeze subsides, the waves play gently on the shore, and then low wailing sounds—spirit voices to the awe-stricken Ojibways—come up from the beach.

This haunt of Manitou became known to the whites as Manitoba Island; the island gave its name first to the lake and then to the nearest trading post of the Hudson's Bay Company. In 1870 the Canadian Parliament adopted it as the appellation of the combined British settlements south and east of the lake, and Manitoba became the name of one of the great provinces of the Canadian Dominion.

Elected for Selkirk

One of the first acts of Governor Archibald was to order a census of the population of the province, preliminary to an election of members to the Manitoba Legislature. The leading citizens of Winnipeg waited on Hon. Donald Smith with a request that he would represent them in the Assembly.[1] Writs having duly been issued, he was elected on December 30th. But the citizens did not stop there. Mr. Smith was asked to be the Conservative candidate in Selkirk for the Dominion House of Commons, and on March 2nd, 1871, he was triumphantly elected. A fortnight later, on March 15th, the assembled wisdom of the new province met in Parliament for the first time.

The building which was fitted up for the use of the Provincial Legislature was the private house of a merchant, Mr. Bannatyne, who surrendered it to the Government, no other place being available. In this plain, unpretentious building, two storeys in height, with attics, the history of the latest off-shoot of the great Mother of Parliaments began. The ground floor was occupied by the two chambers, the attics were used as committee rooms, while the second storey, we are told, was retained by Mr. Bannatyne for himself and family. The rooms were all handsomely carpeted, the throne and chair being tastefully festooned with scarlet drapery, and the doors leading out of the different chambers neatly covered with red cloth. A flag-pole was erected on the roof of the building, and on the day of the opening of Parliament, the Union Jack was displayed for the first time.

Towards this humble Parliament House a guard of honour, consisting of one hundred men of the Ontario Battalion, accompanied by the regimental band, under the command of Major Wainwright, marched from Fort Garry and formed in line in the main street of Winnipeg. A few moments after the troops arrived a salute of fifteen guns

[1] He had been appointed a member of the Executive or Legislative Council for Rupert's Land and the North-West Territory on October 21st.

announced that His Excellency the Lieutenant-Governor had left the Government House, and at three o'clock the Governor, dressed in the Windsor uniform, alighted from his sleigh, accompanied by his private secretary and A.D.C., the troops presenting arms and the band playing the National Anthem. "All proceeded as formally and decorously," wrote Mr. Donald Smith to Sir Stafford Northcote, "as if the eyes of Westminster were upon us."

Immediately on taking his seat on the throne, His Excellency directed the Usher of the Black Rod to summon the members, who, on appearing in the Chamber of the Legislative Council, were requested by His Excellency to choose their Speaker. Having retired for this purpose, they returned in a short time, having elected Mr. Royal, who was presented to the Governor by the Hon. Messrs. Girard and Clarke. The Governor then delivered his speech, congratulating the members of both Houses on the liberal representative institutions which had been bestowed upon so small a community by the Dominion Parliament, and then reminded them that it was their duty to show that such confidence has not been misplaced. He then referred to the isolated position of the province, but stated that this would shortly be changed by the building of railroad and steam communications and the construction of a telegraph line.

Amongst those present at the delivery of the Governor's speech, besides the members of both Houses and a number of ladies, were several officers of the Dominion forces, headed by Lieutenant-Colonel Jarvis, C.M.G., Commandant. The Hudson's Bay Company's officers present, besides Messrs. Smith and J. H. McTavish, who were members of the House, were Messrs. Cyril Grahame and Robert Hamilton, of Norway House. The local clergy present were—Church of England: the Lord Bishop of Rupert's Land, the Archdeacon of Assiniboia, the Rev. Mr. Gardner, and the Rev. Henry Cochrane; Roman Catholic: Bishop Taché, Vicar-General Thibault, and the Rev. Mr. Dugast; while the

Presbyterian and Methodist denominations were represented respectively by the Rev. Messrs. Black and Fletcher and the Rev. George Young.

We read in the letter of an eye-witness that " after the delivery of the speech from the throne, the members of the Lower House, accompanied by most of the visitors, adjourned to the other chamber, His Excellency taking leave at the same time. The first business of the session was to grant leave of absence to Messrs. Smith and Delorme, in order that they might proceed to Ottawa and take their seats in the Dominion House of Commons."

At Ottawa, Mr. Donald Smith was the first of the Manitoba members to appear on the scene, arriving on March 30th. He was greeted cordially by Sir George Cartier, then acting as leader of the House—in Sir John Macdonald's absence in Washington—and formally introduced by him and Mr. Simpson, of Algoma. There was some slight informality in this proceeding, as the returns had not been received, but although calling attention to this, the leader of the Opposition, Hon. Alexander Mackenzie, did not press the point.

An amusing incident occurred after Mr. Smith had shaken hands with the Speaker. The Opposition members jestingly called on him to take a seat on their side. Not yet familiar with the arrangements of the House, he was about to comply when he was rescued amid applause and laughter by Sir George Cartier, and conducted to a seat on the Government side. Events only five years later were to make a change necessary.

The presence of the new member evoked lively interest amongst his colleagues, but he was not to make his first public speech in the House of Commons. A banquet was given a night or two later at the Russell House, and Donald Smith, who was amongst those present, was called upon to speak.

As it had been determined that they were to have a

railway connection with Manitoba, he said, he would speak about the route. It was alleged that the route from Fort Garry to Canada was almost impracticable, but from what he could learn from the people who had traversed it, he believed that this was not the case. By following the old route taken by the Hudson's Bay Company's officers, going behind Nipissing, touching Nepigon, and skirting Lasalle, they would be able to pass through a country, certainly not quite equal to some portions of the Dominion, he admitted, but, both as regards climate and soil, not inferior to much of the country through which ran the intercolonial railway. At the Lake of the Woods they reached the prairie, which extended for fourteen hundred miles to the westward, and afforded facilities for the construction of a railway unequalled by that through which any railway in the Dominion passed.

I believe (he concluded) that during the coming year two steamers will be running on Red River for a distance of 160 miles, which will connect that country with the railway system of the United States. On Lake Manitoba—from which to Fort Garry the distance is only sixty miles over a perfectly level country—and the Saskatchewan River there will doubtless be steamers also within a couple of years, thus to a certain extent opening up and giving the means of bringing down the coal and other products of that extensive and valuable district.

But, gentlemen, the great desideratum is railway communication. I believe that within ten years the railway will be built, and that the friends of those people who are going from Ontario and Quebec to Manitoba will not let the matter rest, but will continue to press this question of the building as rapidly as possible of the railway to the North-West.

Thus early this question of railway communication possessed him : and ere long he was himself taking practical steps to bring a consummation about. Already, however, he was overdue in another quarter. His services were demanded not in Ottawa but in Washington.

On February 25th, 1871, Chief Factor D. McArthur wrote from Montreal :

The Reciprocity Treaty

The Governor and Committee have just sent a telegram to Mr. Donald A. Smith to leave Red River (he is there yet) for Washington, consult Sir Stafford Northcote (who is one of the commissioners appointed by the British Government to consider the *Alabama* and other claims and matters in dispute between the British and U.S. Governments), and proceed at once to London. Dr. Cowan, James Anderson, and R. Campbell are all at home waiting for Smith, and are getting impatient, and I fancy it is at their instance that the Board has issued the telegram in question.

The last half-yearly meeting of the shareholders was a noisy one, so much so that Sir C. Lampson threatened to resign. Smith, the Secretary, has resigned, and Armit now reigns in his stead.

W. C. Sm.
William A

In the year 1866 the Reciprocity Treaty with America, which had been negotiated in 1854, expired. By the terms of that treaty, American fishermen were privileged to fish in Canadian waters in return for the right to dispose of certain produce duty free in American markets. The treaty had worked, on the whole, beneficially both for Canada and the United States; and it was felt that those growing interests which had been developing and increasing during the existence of the treaty would be greatly aided by a renewal.

On the expiration of the treaty, the right to the exclusive use of the inshore fisheries returned to Canada; but the Imperial Government desired the Canadian Government not to resume, at least for a year, the right of exclusion, urging that the prohibition of Americans fishing in those waters should not be put into force. Because of the pressure of Her Majesty's British Government, Canada assented, with great reluctance, to the introduction of a system of annual licences to American fishermen. This was done avowedly for the purpose of asserting Canada's right to the fisheries.

"Although in 1866 that system was commenced," stated Sir John Macdonald in Parliament, "it did not come immediately into force. We had not then fitted out a marine police force, for we were not altogether without expectation that the mind of the Government of the United States

might take a different direction, and that there was a probability of negotiations being renewed respecting the revival of the Reciprocity Treaty; and therefore, although the system was established, it was not rigidly put in force, and no great exertion was made to seize the trespassers who had not taken out licences."[1]

By the wording of the Convention of 1818, foreign fishermen were only allowed to enter Canadian waters for the purpose of procuring wood, water, and shelter; but they claimed that they had a right, although fishing vessels, to enter Canadian ports for trading purposes. It was alleged by Canadian fishermen that, under pretence of trading, Americans were in the habit of invading their fishing grounds and fishing in their waters. The Canadian Government, therefore, thought it well to press upon the consideration of Her Majesty's Government the propriety of England making, on Canada's behalf, a demand on the United States Government for reparation for the wrongs known as "the Fenian raids."

England agreed, but before the Imperial Government actually made any representations, England herself became engaged in a controversy with the United States. The "*Alabama* Claims," in fact, had become a subject of dispute between the two countries, and involved the gravest consequences. Moreover, an attempt made to settle the question by what was known as the Johnson-Clarendon Treaty was rejected by the Senate. So long as this question remained unsettled between the two nations there was no possibility of the former friendly relations being restored, and Britain felt that it was of the utmost importance to her that those amicable relations should be restored. Indeed, her prestige was affected by the absence of an *entente cordiale* between herself and America, and this was most undesirable in 1870, when her statesmen were deeply interested in the great and serious questions which were

[1] *Parliamentary Debates*, 1872.

LADY STRATHCONA

A Charitable and Kindly Lady.

then convulsing Europe. Britain herself was in danger of being drawn into the conflict. And she could not act with the same freedom while the danger existed of the Americans pressing for a settlement of the *Alabama* claims at the very moment when she might be engaged in mortal conflict with another nation.

It was consequently equally the interest of the Dominion and of Britain that the *Alabama* problem, and the other questions threatening the peaceful relations of the two countries, should be settled. From a commercial point of view, it might have been better, in the interest of Canada, that the fishery and Fenian questions should have been adjusted apart from the Imperial question. But the British Minister could not, with due self-respect, have initiated further proceedings. They had concluded a treaty in London with the representative of the United States, and, since this treaty had been rejected by the Senate, Britain could not herself have reopened negotiations on the subject. It fell, therefore, to Sir John Macdonald's Government to request that the matter of the fisheries be discussed. The American Government replied acceding to the request, on condition that the larger and graver matters of dispute were also dealt with.

On February 1st, 1871, a communication was made to Sir John Macdonald by the Governor-General, on behalf of Her Majesty's Government, asking him if he would act as a member of a Joint Commission to settle all questions between England and the United States. "When the proposition was first made to me," he subsequently stated, "I must say that I felt considerable embarrassment, and great reluctance to become a member of the Commission . . . . A sense of duty prevailed, and my colleagues pressed upon me also that I would be wanting in my duty to my country if I declined the appointment."[1]

As British Commissioners, Lord de Grey, Sir Stafford

[1] *Parliamentary Debates;* Pope, *Memoirs of Sir John A. Macdonald.*

Northcote, Professor Bernard, and Sir Edward Thornton, the British Minister at Washington, were to be his colleagues. On February 22nd he wrote to Sir John Rose: "I contemplate my visit to Washington with a good deal of anxiety. If anything goes wrong, I shall be made the scapegoat—at all events, so far as Canada is concerned. However, I thought that after all that Canada has done for me, I should not shirk the responsibility."

At the beginning of March, Sir John arrived in Washington, joining there the assembled British Commissioners. On March 8th the proceedings began by the American Commissioner, Mr. Fish, stating the *Alabama* case; and not many sessions had passed before the Canadian Premier realised the calibre and the temper of his English *confrères*.

On April 1st, 1871, he wrote to Hon. Charles Tupper:

I must say that I am greatly disappointed at the course taken by the British Commissioners. They seem to have only one thing on their minds—that is, to go home to England with a treaty in their pockets, settling everything, no matter what it cost to Canada. I was at first a good deal encouraged, because Northcote and Bernard stood by me against any permanent cession of the fisheries, but the four have since gone together against me. It is, therefore, exceedingly unfortunate that Sir Stafford is on the Commission, as his party in England will feel themselves a good deal fettered in Parliament by his action, and will be unable to defend the position which Canada will certainly take. The effect which must be produced on the public mind in Canada by a declaration from both parties in the Imperial Parliament against our course will greatly prejudice the idea of British connection, as British protection will have proved itself a farce. I do not like to look at the consequences, but we are so clearly in the right that we must throw the responsibility on England.

It was at this juncture that Mr. Donald Smith, M.P., who had just taken his seat in the Canadian Parliament, arrived at Washington, to confer both with his political chief, Sir John Macdonald, and with Sir Stafford Northcote, Governor of the Hudson's Bay Company. During the next few weeks his loyalty to his two principals was subjected to a sore trial.

Negotiations at Washington

On April 16th, Sir John Macdonald wrote:

Sir Stafford Northcote has disappointed me altogether. I think he feels now that he has put himself in a false position by coming here.

In the same month, Mr. Smith wrote:

To-day (Good Friday) Sir Stafford told me that he would as soon change places with a galley-slave as endure his present situation a month or six weeks longer. He thinks it bad enough to fight the Americans and to be continually "rapped over the knuckles" by the Foreign Office, but that Sir John Macdonald's hostility and distrust are unbearable.

On the other hand, he wrote in a memorandum inscribed "for Mr. Cunningham":

Sir John told me that he was fully alive to the grave responsibility resting upon the Commissioners, and especially upon himself as representing Canada. If the treaty were unacceptable to the Senate they would reject it, and a friendly member of that body had told him that "another rejection would mean war." Nevertheless, he was not going to be frightened out of doing his duty, and he had been immensely relieved at receiving Lord Kimberley's assurance that Canada's rights in her fisheries were admitted, and would not be over-ridden in this or any other treaty.

After dinner Sir Stafford explained to me broadly the results he hoped might accrue from the proposed treaty, apart from its definite object in removing all present causes of friction between the two great Powers immediately concerned. If Great Britain and America would agree on a definition of contraband of war, and agree to the principle of a joint tribunal to settle disputes, other Powers might be brought in and represented on such a tribunal, which would permanently fix the rights and duties of neutrals. I agreed that this would be a great gain, but that we as Canadians could hardly be expected to centre our attention on ulterior advantages when we had so much already and immediately at stake.

Sir John makes no secret of the fact that he is dissatisfied with the tone adopted by the British Commissioners, which is far too complacent. He says they pride themselves on their magnanimity, but that their magnanimity costs them nothing where Canada is concerned. The Americans talk and act throughout as men who are resolved to have their own way. They know that England dare not press her case forward as if war were the alternative to settlement by arbitration.

The following is an extract from the *Journal of High Commission* addressed to Sir Curtis Lampson :

Friday, April 21.—Sir John had not received any reply to his urgent message to Sir George Cartier when Sir Stafford showed him a copy of a telegram from Lord Granville instructing Lord de Grey to agree to a settlement of the fisheries in a manner which must prove disadvantageous to us. Sir John was quite beside himself. He said he was going to pack up and go home, the proceedings were and had been a farce, and he would rather cut off his right hand than sign such articles. Sir Stafford at once exclaimed upon the unwisdom of this course, to which Sir John replied, that, as the representative of Canada, he owed a duty to his own people, that his colleagues would repudiate him if he acted otherwise, that no Englishman could possibly be expected to share his feelings, and that if Canadian interests were to be sacrificed it would be political ruin for him to appear as a party to the sacrifice.

When leaving me he said that Cartier's silence was awkward, but he knew that his action would be approved. I pointed out to him that in my judgment his action would be most unwise, because the whole treaty would certainly be carried through, and that it was by no means too late to affect its ultimate character for our benefit, and that he must contest the articles inch by inch. He retorted that he liked fighting in the open, and not " struggling in muddy water with sharks." He did not appear at dinner, and I feared he had actually carried out his threat. The next morning, however, he announced that he had reconsidered his decision. Sir Stafford and I were in consequence greatly relieved.

Writing to his wife on April 22nd, Sir Stafford said :

Macdonald seems to think that he has stood out long enough ; certainly it has been longer than our idea of long enough.[1]

To Dr. Tupper the Canadian Premier wrote on April 27th :

My first impulse, I confess, was to hand in my resignation. . . . After thinking it over for a night, however, I refrained from doing so, reserving to myself the right of ulterior action. It was fortunate that I did so, else the articles would have been much worse than they are. The lease of the fisheries would have been for twenty-five years instead of for ten with notice. Fish oil would have been excluded, and only the fish proved to have been caught in the inshore

[1] Lang, *Life of Earl Iddesleigh.*

fisheries admitted. These alterations, it may perhaps be said, are of no consequence, as Canada is certain to reject the treaty *in toto*. I felt, however, that I ought not to throw away any chance for Canada, and it is quite on the cards that England, in her desire to settle all matters with the United States, may be forced to offer a substantial compensation to Canada as an inducement to our Parliament to secure to the U.S. citizens the use of the Welland, St. Lawrence, and other Canals, and the United States agrees to do the same thing with respect to its State canals. This article shows expressly that the canals are not a portion of the St. Lawrence, but are within the sole control of Canada.[1]

On Monday morning (the 24th) Sir John showed Mr. Smith a telegram he had received from Cartier. "Those fellows up there," he characteristically remarked, "have utterly spoilt my plans by their procrastination." The message was the one he had been awaiting the whole of the previous week. It ran as follows:

We are sensible of the gravity of the position and alive to the deep interest which Canada has in the settlement of all disputes between Great Britain and the United States. The Queen's Government, having formally pledged herself that our fisheries should not be disposed of without our consent, to force us now into a disposal of them for a sum, to be fixed by arbitration, and free fish, would be a breach of faith and an indignity never before offered to a great British possession. The people of Canada were ready to exchange the right of fishing for reciprocal trade rights to be agreed upon; but if these cannot be obtained she prefers to retain her fisheries, and she protests against the course which, against her will, is being pursued with reference to her interests and property. We were never informed that the fisheries would have been inextricably mixed up with the *Alabama* question, and could not have apprehended that an attempt would be made to coerce us into an unwilling disposal of them to obtain results, however important, on other points in dispute. Our Parliament would never consent to a treaty on the basis now proposed, and if persisted in you would withdraw from the Commission.

To Dr. Tupper Sir John Macdonald described, on the 27th, the arguments on the inland navigation articles:

[1] Pope: *Memoirs of Sir John A. Macdonald.*

Then it happened that Donald A. Smith mentioned to Sir Stafford Northcote and myself that it was of great importance to the North-West to secure the free navigation of the three rivers mentioned in Item 8. He says that the use of the Yukon is absolutely indispensable. That already American vessels from San Francisco carry goods via the Yukon into our country at rates much cheaper than they can be conveyed by any other route. The Stickine River, he says, goes through a gold country, and its navigation is of importance. The Porcupine is a branch of the Yukon. As the Americans contended for the general principle, they were obliged to consent with respect to these three rivers.[1]

On April 29th the Premier wrote to Tupper:

The rights of Canada being substantially preserved by reserving to her the veto power as to the fisheries, I am sincerely desirous that a treaty should be made, as it is of the greatest importance that the *Alabama* and San Juan matters should be settled, especially the former. The expectations by the American people of a settlement of these matters have been strung to a very high pitch, and the disappointment, in case the negotiations end in nothing, will be very great. If this attempt to settle the *Alabama* question should fail, no peaceable solution of it is possible, and the war cloud will hang over England and Canada.

Canada has the game all in her own hands. All fear of war will have to be averted, and between now and next February, when Parliament meets, our Government will have plenty of time to consider the whole position. The American fishermen having been excluded from our waters for two seasons, their clamour will be very great, and the importance of finally settling the question will be increased in the minds of the two Governments of Great Britain and the United States. Canada may then be in a position to say that she must get pecuniary compensation from England, and liberal tariff arrangements with the United States. I need not, however, dilate on this subject, which we can talk over at leisure when we arrive at Ottawa.

No sooner had the Company's Governor and its chief representative in North America concluded their business

[1] Article XXVI. of the Treaty read: "The United States engage that the rivers Yukon, Porcupine, and Stickine in Alaska, ascending and descending from, to, and into the sea, shall forever remain free and open for the purpose of commerce to the subjects of Great Britain."

The Treaty of Washington was signed on May 8th, 1871. In the following year it was ratified by the Canadian Parliament and went into operation on July 1st, 1873, and continued in force for twelve years.

in Washington than an imperative duty summoned them to London. A vital matter was pending connected with the fur trade. This had been postponed from time to time, and could not well be evaded longer. I have already referred to the abrogation of the Deed Poll between the Company in London and its wintering partners, which had been in existence with slight modification since 1821.

The question of the compensation claimed by the Chief Factors and Chief Traders had been canvassed freely on both sides ever since the transfer of Rupert's Land to Canada was agreed upon by the Board. In 1870 Chief Trader × Roderick MacFarlane had visited London and pressed the matter upon Sir Stafford Northcote. The whole of this transaction is important, and, moreover, it is extremely curious. It well deserves to have a little further light to be shed upon it. Mr. MacFarlane expresses the view of the wintering partners very clearly in the following letter to Sir Stafford.

LONDON,

June 15, 1870.

DEAR SIR STAFFORD,—With reference to the subject of our conversation at the Hudson's Bay House yesterday respecting the feeling prevailing amongst the "wintering partners" as to their right to anticipate in the indemnity of £300,000 paid by Canada for the relinquishment of our right of territory and exclusive trade in Rupert's Land, you intimated a wish to have their views submitted to you in a definite shape for your consideration.

The subject is a large one, and I regret that the very few hours at my disposal, before leaving London, will not allow me to go into it so fully as I could wish. But I should be glad to submit a few general points to your notice in the hope that they may be deemed worthy of your attention and that of the directors before the claims of the Chief Factors and Chief Traders are finally and irrevocably set aside.

The fact that the directors here obtained a legal opinion against the view that the shareholders are entitled to the whole of the indemnity cannot be fairly assumed to dispose of the claims of the wintering partners, inasmuch as everyone knows that the validity of a lawyer's opinion depends entirely on the case submitted to him;

× afterwards Factor in 1872, and Chief Factor in 1875.

and as we have never had an opportunity of submitting our side of the question to legal investigation, the opinion on which the directors appear to rely is, so far, merely a one-sided one. To show that such an opinion cannot always be relied on, I need only refer to the somewhat similar divergence of views which occurred a short time ago in connection with the Fenchurch Street property in the improved value of which it was thought by some of the Company in London that the wintering partners had no pecuniary interest. The result of a friendly suit at last proved, however, that they had, and I venture with all respect to suggest, if the shareholders continue to maintain their individual right to the indemnity, that a similar suit should again be instituted in order that we may have an authoritative decision on a point of so much importance to us, and, I will add, to the shareholders themselves, who will in the end be the greatest gainers by acting with fairness and generosity to the wintering partners. What I would ask is that in common fairness we should have an opportunity of taking a legal opinion upon our view of the case, as well as the shareholders in London, and that the matter should not be disposed of by an *ex parte* decision such as that on which I understand the directors at present rely.

I am not a lawyer, but it does not appear to me to require any legal knowledge to point out that as the monopoly of our trade depends on our possession of the country where the trade is carried on, the selling of the land, so to speak, from under the trade is an obvious and palpable injury to that trade, and an injury consequently to us whose incomes are entirely dependent on the profits of the trade. It is impossible to dissociate the land from the trade, as the trade without the land is obviously a very different thing from what it was when both the land and the trade were ours.

At the meeting of the Northern Council of the fur trade in the previous summer, the members had deputed Mr. Smith to proceed to England at the earliest opportunity and present their claims before the Governor and committee. Towards the close of the year he wrote to Mr. MacFarlane :

FORT GARRY,
December 15, 1870.

MY DEAR SIR,—I have read with much interest your observations in regard to our interests in the fur trade and the position in which we stand towards the shareholders at home, and you may rest assured your representations will be carefully considered and be used for the general good.

On a Mission to London

I shall not fail to urge on the Board the necessity and justice of dealing most liberally with the officers in the country, and have much hope of success.—Believe me, etc.,

DONALD A. SMITH.

Naturally, having pinned their faith to Mr. Smith, every officer in the service awaited anxiously the result of his mission to London. "From our isolated position and want of unison and unanimity," wrote Chief ~~Factor~~ Roderick MacKenzie to Mr. MacFarlane, "the directors and shareholders are doing all they can to deprive us of our heritage. By last accounts, Mr. Smith was on his way to Montreal. In London, several officers are awaiting Mr. Smith's arrival to enter into the details of our case. The sharks are numerous and powerful, and it will need our united action to escape their ravenous gullets. . . . The death of Governor Mactavish has deprived us of a guiding power as well as a friendly and judicious coadjutor. His kind and gentle sway will be remembered with regret by all who knew him."

Indeed, the whole personnel of the fur trade was deeply concerned in the result of Chief Commissioner Smith's visit to London. Several wintering partners had crossed the ocean and were awaiting him there. Amongst these was Chief Factor Campbell, from whose letters to a fellow-officer a further insight into the situation may be obtained. On January 31st, 1871, he wrote from Scotland to Roderick MacFarlane:

I did not visit the Hudson's Bay House, London, till invited up to attend the great meeting of shareholders, 22nd November. Mr. James Anderson, C.F., and myself were present of the Hudson's Bay officers. We both met a very kind and frank reception from the Governor and Deputy-Governor and Board. But as for the shareholders, we were perfectly disgusted with the greed and selfishness they evinced in their speeches, and a great many were present at the meeting. . . . You will be saying what steps have been taken since we came home this season to settle this long pending affair between the Hudson's Bay Board and the fur traders? Nothing. How can we broach the subject when the delegate to whom the whole was

made over by the Council is still in Red River? His non-arrival is a great disappointment to us. It is expected he will be here in course of March, and should this be the case I hope something will be done. . . .

Four months later he again wrote, recording Mr. Smith's arrival. On July 6th Mr. Smith himself faced the excited shareholders of the Hudson's Bay Company. One wintering partner, Chief ~~Factor John~~ Fortescue, has thus described the proceedings:

"Sir Stafford, as you know, was absent on Mr. Smith's arrival in England, but as soon as he got home, Mr. Smith lost no time in laying our propositions before the Board. Sir Stafford seemed inclined to concede to the wintering partners, but the Board showed the most determined opposition. They absolutely laughed at the guarantee—and I am sorry to say that their letter to the Council of April, 1865, bore them out; it was expressly specified as so many years, which we, of course, interpreted 'outfits.' They declined any compromise whatever, and it was only by holding over them *in terrorem* the possibility of our throwing them over altogether in a body that they consented to consider the case and lay the affair before the shareholders. The result, after three or four stormy meetings, ultimately was that the Board was empowered to make arrangements to satisfy us. I must tell you, moreover, that our rights were submitted to legal authority, and we were strongly advised not to proceed to extremity as the event was very uncertain.

"Mr. Smith then demanded the vacant shares to be filled up, but this was refused. The Company assert their right to appoint when they please, or not to appoint at all. The old Deed Poll was, I believe, doubtfully worded in this respect, and I am sorry to say that this has given serious offence to many of our senior clerks, who think themselves passed over, and that no efforts were made in their behalf at home. The effort was made, but without avail. A compromise had to be effected, and I believe Mr.

Smith made the best he could. . . .[1] Each officer's separate claim was taken into consideration, and the gross total made up the sum of £107,055. . . . The general idea is that the Company voted £107,055 of spare cash to the satisfying of our claims, which amount was subsequently divided in the proportions against our names; but such is not the case. Each officer's guarantee was first taken and insisted upon, and then his retiring interest as proposed by our Council of 1870.

"I am informed that when Mr. Smith found the Oregon claim was not allowed, he increased that sum demanded for retiring interest under the first arrangement, therefore you realise about £675 for retiring share, and the balance, £480, or nearly so, is for your guarantee. This is really how these amounts were made up, and this, if calculated, give those large amounts for the factors which at first I thought so unjust. Nominally, they do not admit the guarantee.

"The meetings were more than stormy; they were tumultuous. I think the basis of reorganisation is a good one if carried out properly. It will, I am sure, increase our dividends."

On his return to Canada, Mr. Smith thus describes the result of his mission in a letter to Roderick MacFarlane, under date September 26th, 1871:

> Sir Stafford and the Directors generally evinced an earnest desire to have this important matter disposed of without loss of time, but the difficulties in the way of an adjustment were such that it was not until late in July an arrangement acceptable to the parties interested was concluded; a delay readily accounted for by the fact that after the terms of agreement had been settled between the Board and myself, the consent of the proprietors had to be obtained to a

[1] "I consider an acknowledgment of the right of the wintering partners to share in the proceeds not only of the present sale of lands, but of all future sales, as the only certain means which you possess of attaching permanently to your service the class of experienced officers and servants the Company has always commanded in Rupert's Land. Moreover, if their claim to a share of the indemnity paid by Canada is rejected, they are advised to take steps to test their claim by the process of law."—*Donald A. Smith to the Shareholders.*

measure, the first and most apparent result of which would be to compel them to pay to their officers a sum exceeding one-eighth of the entire capital of the Company at its then value.

Ultimately, however, notwithstanding a most determined opposition on the part of many of their number, the shareholders gave their sanction to the terms of the agreement. I have now the pleasure of transmitting this, not doubting that it will be satisfactory to you as it has been to all the other officers to whom it has been submitted. The Power of Attorney with which I was entrusted by you fully empowered me to act for you in all respects as if you had been personally present, but I deemed it better to execute the agreement in so far as you were concerned, subject to its ratification by your own signature.

"Mr. Smith fought a hard battle for us," wrote Chief Factor Robert Hamilton, "and I do not believe there is a man in or out of the country who would have secured us such terms.

"My old friend Chief Factor James Anderson was up in London during the greater part of the time that the negotiations were going forward, and he writes me in high terms of the admirable conduct and unflinching determination of Mr. Smith."

But in spite of the applause with which his efforts on behalf of the wintering partners were greeted on his return to Canada, I do not believe that Donald A. Smith was ever quite satisfied with his part in the transaction. For he came to see, with greater and growing clearness—what few in the fur trade then saw—not merely the potential value of the land in the North-West, but the claims of the wintering partners to a share in that land.[1]

"If you can show," he said, "that land has ever been sold for the benefit of the fur trade, like goods and agricultural produce, the whole question would be settled." Alas, it could not be settled when the officers of the fur trade refused to accept any consideration of land the value of which was so remote.

"I ought to have pressed it on them," he once told an

[1] See Appendix C.

old friend, Chief Factor Anderson. "But really, it seemed such uphill work, and I had so much to do."

It was in reference to the Washington Treaty, and perhaps also to the Red River affair, that Mr. Smith wrote a significant and prophetic passage in one of his letters to Robert Lowe (afterwards Earl of Sherbrooke):

> Throughout all this unhappy business I am aware that Canada and her domestic affairs have tried the patience of England and her statesmen, who are, I doubt not, deeply preoccupied elsewhere. I gather that some would like to be free from these Colonial entanglements. But I hope to live to see the day when the Dominion of Canada will be strong enough and rich and populous enough to lift this burden from the shoulders of the Mother Country and even to help you to bear some properly of your own.

Compare this passage with the utterance, equally proud and confident of his political chief, Sir John Macdonald, when, in 1872, he declared in the Canadian House of Commons:

> I hope to live to see the day, and if I do not, that my son may be spared to see Canada the right arm of England, to see Canada a powerful auxiliary to the Empire, not as now a cause of anxiety and a source of danger.

Men of Britain, has not Canada fulfilled that trust? Has she not abundantly justified that hope on the battle fields of the Empire?

CHAPTER XIII

ANNEXATION AND AMNESTY (1871)

IT is doubtful whether Canadians of this generation recognise by what narrow margin of chance Manitoba, and indeed a large portion of the fertile belt in Rupert's Land, was saved to Canada and the Empire. Many and potent, though not always patent, forces had been working in the direction of the annexation of the country to the American Republic. Two separate forces frustrated the attempt. The steadfast political faith of one party and the ambition and fears of another averted from Manitoba the destiny of Texas and Oregon.

A quarter of a century later, in 1896, Mr. (then Sir Donald) Smith thus surveyed the situation :

What were the circumstances of the country, and what were the relations of England and Canada to the neighbouring Republic, at that time ? We all know that there was anything but a friendly feeling; indeed, that there was a very bitter feeling between the two countries, for the *Alabama* difficulty had not yet been disposed of, and the Joint High Commission had not sat as it did one or two years afterwards to dispose of those very important points relating to the two countries which grew out of the civil war in the United States. At that time, unhappily, too, we had not the same feeling of cordiality on the part of the Mother Country towards the Colonies that we have to-day. The change is indeed a happy one, but as showing the position of the North-West, showing on what the people of the Red River in a great measure depended, namely, the sympathy of those in the neighbouring States of America, when they rose in insurrection against the Mother Country and against Canada, I may be permitted to read an authority on that point. I have in my hand a newspaper, which will be taken as good authority, I have no doubt, for it is the official organ of the Provincial Government of that day. It is called the *New Nation*. In it we have the follow-

ing headings: "Consolidation," "The Future of the American Continent," "One Flag, One Empire," "Natural Lines Must Prevail."

And it goes on to say:

> Again we present our readers with the views of the outside world on the Red River struggle for freedom. As the direct result of that struggle we hear once more, but in louder and more determined tones, an enunciation of that great doctrine of which some of the most illustrious men in this world have been the expounders.
>
> That over all this broad continent—from ocean to ocean—but one flag shall wave, but one Empire be dominant. It is a vision of a grand consolidation of peoples and interests, such as can be paralleled nowhere else among all the kingdoms of the earth. It is a vision the realisation of which has always been regarded but as a matter of time, and which is now, we believe, nearer to fulfilment than many would suppose. It will be seen that we in Red River are credited with having largely aided in the movement to bring about this golden future, and that sympathy and best wishes for our success are ours from many quarters. At the beginning of the uprising in this colony it was said—and truthfully said—that many who saw the beginning of the movement then inaugurated could not see the end. That end—it will be our business from time to time to show our readers—will be the extension of liberty on this continent, a breaking down of the artificial barriers of diverse nationalities which divide and estrange the dwellers in the New World, and the creation of a magnificent power whose influence on the rest of the world shall herald a brighter and better day.
>
> That Red River, the keystone of the confederacy projected by England, will never go under the authority of the Dominion, is now apparent. The keystone having given way, the rest of the fabric will topple speedily; and in its place, we repeat, will be upreared an unbroken, undivided Empire, such as nature seems to have prepared the way for on this continent.

Bearing this in mind, I want you to consider the following from the *New York Sun*:

> The tendency of events of this North-American continent is plainly towards the consolidation of all the people dwelling upon it into one great nation, around the present United States as a nucleus. From the Polar Sea to the Isthmus of Darien there

will be in time but one government and one national power. Canada, Rupert's Land, Victoria, Mexico will have but one flag, and eventually Cuba and her sister islands will join us. Thus united, we can defy the world and offer a boundless asylum to the oppressed of every clime and country. Who among us can say that ours is not a glorious destiny, or reflect without exultation that he is an American citizen?

Many at the present day have very little notion of the then circumstances of the country. There was unquestionably a very great and imminent danger at that time of the country being absorbed in the United States. That fact was brought to my recollection by a gentleman of high position in Minnesota, whom I met the other day as I passed through that country. He stated that they were then ready to place a very large sum of money at the disposal of Mr. Riel and his friends, upwards of half a million dollars, with the view of having the country annexed to the United States. We should also remember that at that time there was much ill-feeling and much bitterness between England and the United States; that without railways, with a trackless wilderness, and some 500 miles to traverse, it was impossible in less time than ten months to send a single soldier to that country, with all the power of Great Britain and Canada; that while the insurrection commenced in October, and Fort Garry was taken possession of in November, it was not until the latter part of August following that it was possible for Field Marshal Wolseley, then Colonel Wolseley, to bring his forces up to Red River.[1]

It is clear from this that momentous issues hung in the balance. Indeed, in his Ottawa diary in the spring of 1870, Sir Stafford Northcote wrote that Canadians

fancied that England would gladly be rid of them; and what with fishery quarrels and their own divisions, they are certainly rather a luxurious ornament of the Empire.

The Americans, for their part, were smarting under the official hostility shown to them by the British during the long struggle against the Southern confederacy. Sir John Macdonald had already written:

It is quite evident to me, not only from this conversation, but from advices from Washington, that the United States Government

[1] Parliamentary Debates, 1896.

are resolved to do all they can, short of war, to get possession of the western territory, and we must take immediate and vigorous steps to counteract them.

Further, relying on the divisions among the people at Red River, the Fenian organisation again showed its hand. It now began to make a systematic effort to wrest a vast territory from British control. It had been foiled in 1866, but the leaders considered the present time more propitious. Now they could link arms with the avowed annexationists at Red River.

On November 24th, 1869, the following appeared in the Minneapolis *Tribune:*

> We have reason to believe that the Fenian organisation is at the bottom of the Red River movement; that the Fenian leaders have been secretly at work for several months to bring it about, and that their later plans have been chiefly directed to their consummation. The present occurrences in the Red River country form the beginning of the execution of an entirely new Fenian programme for which it is claimed that the organisation has more means in hand, and better preparations than it ever had before. Should it be the fact that their plans have taken the direction of such an initiative, the Fenian leaders are certainly to be credited with more shrewdness than has hitherto been evinced by them. The fertile British territory beyond Lake Superior is absolutely indefensible by Canada or England. Neither troops nor supplies can be conveyed to it in the winter season except through the United States. A small Fenian force will suffice to wrest it from the Dominion and the Crown; and the territory is of immense extent and value. Its Fenian capture would be a decidedly hard blow, both morally and materially, to the powers, Imperial and Colonial, at which Fenian hostility is aimed. Whatever further direction the operations of the Fenian brotherhood may take, it is expected, in their own ranks and by both the Canadian and American authorities, that the coming winter will see active undertakings of some sort.

On December 31st, 1869, Sir John Macdonald wrote to Mr. Rose:

We have undoubted information that the insurgents have been in communication with the Fenian body in New York, and letters

have been interchanged. O'Donohoe, the young priest, has thrown off the ecclesiastical garb and avowed himself a Fenian. The governing body at New York will send neither men nor money, but have been most liberal with promises. They have, I believe, sent an agent to stir them up. It is said that General Spear, one of the U. S. Generals of the last war, and whom you may remember to have been in command at St. Alban's in '66, is the man who has gone.

Again, on March 11th, he wrote :

The propositions adopted at the Red River conference are, most of them, reasonable enough, and can easily be disposed of with their delegates. Things look well enough, were we only assured of Riel's good faith. But the unpleasant suspicion remains that he is only wasting time by sending this delegation, until the approach of summer enables him to get material support from the United States. It is believed by many that he is in the pay of the United States. We may settle upon the terms of the constitution to be granted to the North-West with the delegates, when they arrive here, and pass an Act for the purpose, but that will not prevent Riel from refusing to ratify the arrangement, if he pleases. Meanwhile, he is in possession of the country, and is consolidating his Government. The foolish and criminal attempt of Boulton and Scott to renew the fight has added greatly to Riel's strength. He has put down two distinct attempts to upset his Government, and the American sympathisers will begin to argue that his Government has acquired a legal status, and he will be readily persuaded of that fact himself.

Another observer, J. M. Reid, reported that Riel and his associates received much moral, if no other, support from the States. " Yankeedom," he said, " is at the bottom of the whole ruction, but they manage things adroitly." At Red River, Major H. N. Robinson had founded a paper openly preaching annexation.

Another man, named McKinney, had informed Governor McDougall's emissary, Major Wallace, that in his judgment, " the United States was the natural outlet for the settlement, and the people wanted nothing else." Another declared that, should the contingency arise, he would at any time sign a memorial to the United States Government asking for annexation.

"Colonel" Enos Stuttsman

Among the leaders of the annexation movement was a bizarre individual, who called himself "Colonel" Enos Stuttsman, whose personal activity and martial ardour triumphed over the distressing circumstance of his having been born without either arms or legs. It was this personage who undertook to address President Grant in the following terms:

PEMBINA, D.T.,
November 2, 1869.

SIR,—I should be deficient in my duty both as an official and as an American citizen if I did not solemnly call your attention to the situation as it exists in this part of the Continent of North America and the opportunity it offers for instant and decisive action on the part of the Government of the United States. At this moment this country is properly without any government, and a large number of its inhabitants—the majority, I believe—are favourably disposed to its annexation by the United States.

ENOS STUTTSMAN.

Throughout the autumn and winter of 1870, O'Donohoe was busy in making his plans for an invasion. Of this man we are told that he was "one of those miserable beings who seem to inherit the vices of every calling and nationality to which they can claim a kindred. Educated for some semi-clerical profession, which he abandoned for the more congenial trade of treason, rendered apparently secure by distance, he remained in garb the cleric while he plundered his prisoners and indulged in the fashionable pastime of gambling with purloined property and racing with confiscated horses—a man whose revolting countenance at once suggested hulks and prison garbs, and who, in any other land save America, would probably long since have reached the convict level for which nature destined him."[1]

In his schemes O'Donohoe was aided by the once notorious "General" O'Neill, who had taken part in the rebellion against the United States in the late war. One of his martial proceedings was to recruit, in 1864, from the

[1] Butler: *The Great Lone Land.*

Andersonville prison pens, a regiment of 700 Irishmen for the Confederate service. He persuaded these poor Fenians that it was better for them, and more honourable to their soldierly instincts, thus to desert and forswear the flag of their adopted country, whose bounty and service they had voluntarily accepted, than to remain prisoners of war, to be starved to death by the very " belligerent " for whom he was recruiting. The alternative was doubtless tempting to them, as it could not have been to any true born American, or to any honest naturalised American citizen or soldier.

In 1868 the Fenians had obtained from the Government the return of the arms seized at St. Albans, consisting of about 1,300 muskets, and again proceeded to organise an expedition against Canada. Later in the same year a Fenian Congress was held at Philadelphia, and the leader O'Neill marched through the town at the head of three regiments of the so-styled Irish Republican army in green uniforms, numbering, it was reported, 3,000 men.

During the years 1869-70 the Fenians made fresh military preparations. O'Neill wrote to the circles that a Congress of the Fenian Brotherhood was ordered to meet in New York on March 8th, and desired them to send none but the best and most reliable men, and, if possible, " to let them have a military record." These activities continued, and in course of time a definite issue emerged.

One autumn day a messenger came hot-foot to Fort Garry, bearing the following letter to Mr. Smith :

PEMBINA,
October 5, 1871.

DEAR SIR,—This place was this morning at 7.30 taken possession of by O'Donohoe, O'Neill, Donelly, and Curley, who had thirty-five men along as followers. They were driven out by Colonel Wheaton, of the U.S. Army. He captured O'Neill, Donelly, and Curley with ten of their men, also all their ammunition and arms ; at least, what they did not carry off with them. O'Donohoe left his cloak and overcoat, and since his flight from the fort has been captured by some of the half-breeds on this side of the line. He has not been

taken here, but one of them has gone to General Wheaton to see if he will take him for security. If he does not take him, I will try and get the half-breeds to take him to Fort Garry. The French half-breeds of Pembina deserve credit for their prompt action in the affair. Send us help, and we will get enough together to make a good fight.

My life is said to be in danger because I tried to lock the door on O'Donohoe when I saw the troops close.—Yours truly,

W. H. Watt.

The tidings being conveyed to the authorities, Governor Archibald at once resolved to make an appeal to the half-breeds to unite with the invaders. Unfortunately, he was faced by the awkward situation that warrants for arrests of the Métis leaders, on a charge of complicity in the murder of Thomas Scott, were in the hands of the local police. How could they be expected to appear at Fort Garry to defend it, who might have to remain there to defend themselves? Father Ritchot propounded this query to the Governor in a note, to which he received the following reply:

Government House,

October 5, 1871.

Reverend Sir,—Your note has just reached me. You speak of the difficulties which might impede any action of Mr. Riel, in coming forward to use his influence with his fellow-citizens, to rally to the support of the Province in this present emergency.

Should Mr. Riel come forward, as suggested, he need be under no apprehension that his liberty shall be interfered with in any way, to use your own language, *pour la circonstance actuelle.*

It is hardly necessary for me to add that the co-operation of the French half-breeds and their leaders in support of the Crown, under present circumstances, will be very welcome, and cannot be looked upon otherwise than as entitling them to most favourable consideration.

Let me add that in giving you this assurance with promptitude, I feel myself entitled to be met in the same spirit.

The sooner the French half-breeds assume the attitude in question, the more graceful will be their action, and the more favourable their influence.

I have the honour to be, reverend sir, yours truly,

A. G. Archibald, *Lieut.-Governor.*

The clergy assisted the Governor and Chief Commissioner Smith in the work of pacification. His colleagues in the Provisional Government, on whom O'Donohoe had counted, began to come out against him. At last Riel, now eager to obtain an amnesty, went into the French settlements and used his influence against O'Donohoe.

The Governor himself reviewed the troops collected under the command of Riel, Lépine and their companions, thereby accepting their services. He promised them at least a temporary immunity from molestation on account of the crime of which they were accused; he shook hands with them; he received a letter signed by them; and, through his secretary, he addressed to them an official reply, complimenting them on the loyalty which they had shown and the assistance which they had rendered. He convinced himself—though Sir John Macdonald afterwards had misgivings on this point—that this exhibition of fidelity was genuine and *bona fide,* and that it largely contributed to the preservation of Her Majesty's Dominions from insult and invasion. In short, he was satisfied, to use his own language, that "if the Dominion has at this moment a province to defend, and not one to conquer, we owe it to the policy of forbearance."

"If," he said, "I had driven the French half-breeds into the hands of the enemy, O'Donohoe would have been joined by all the population between Assiniboine and the Frontier, Fort Garry would have passed into the hands of an armed mob, and the English settlers to the north of Assiniboine would have suffered horrors it makes me shudder to contemplate."

On November 2nd, 1871, Chief Factor Robert Hamilton wrote from Norway House:

> You will have heard all about the Fenian excitement at Red River. It looked rather serious at one time, and I thought we would have had some sharp work; thanks, however, to the prompt measures taken by Colonel Wheaton of the American garrison stationed at

Pembina, the whole affair was nipped in the bud. I must say that the English-speaking portion of the population responded admirably to the Governor's call to arms. The loyal French also behaved well, but the Provisional gentry kept pretty well aloof till they saw that we could do without them, and then they came forward and made a great demonstration of loyalty. Messrs. Christie, McMurray, Clarke and myself went as far as Pembina, but arrived too late for any of the fun; in fact, the only man who had an opportunity of distinguishing himself was our friend, William Watt, who seized O'Donohoe by the throat and tried to make him prisoner, but the Fenian scoundrel was too much for poor Watt with his one arm.

I was in court at Pembina during the time the prisoners were on trial, and I must say I never saw such mockery of justice. It was the first Yankee court I ever was in, and I don't wish ever to see another. Colonel Wheaton was prosecuting attorney, and I must say did his utmost to get a conviction, but the Pembina people to a man were in favour of the ruffians, and of course they were acquitted. I had the honour of an introduction to the great General O'Neill, and found him a very jolly looking fellow, with not much of the warrior in his appearance.

Ever since the day of Riel's flight there arose in a definite shape what had been for some months hovering about vaguely in the minds of a few of the principals—the great absorbing question of amnesty. Had or had not an amnesty been privately and secretly granted the insurgents by the Government of the day? Had the promise been held out to them that, on condition of their laying down their arms and taking the oath of allegiance to Canada, their past offences, including the shooting of Scott, would be forgiven? Did Riel and the members of the Provisional Government so understand it?

It is easy enough now to unravel the skein of mystery, falsehood and misunderstanding. Unerringly can we lay a finger on the master-thread. But forty years ago the problem was baffling.

When the Queen's proclamation was issued in December, 1869, it contemplated, of course, only the acts committed by the insurgents known at the time of its issue. Circumstances

became altogether changed when the death of Thomas Scott occurred. The granting of the amnesty in accordance with that proclamation, without pardoning those concerned in the death of Scott, would not have satisfied the people who clamoured for an amnesty, and therefore would have been found useless in so far as the peace of the country and contentment of the people were concerned. But how could the murderers of Scott be pardoned?

Early in June, 1870, Bishop Taché made the promise, in the name of the Canadian Government, that *all* who participated in the rebellion would receive a full pardon, and then devoted many succeeding months of his life to explaining how he was was led (or misled) into making so handsome an offer.

On June 30th, 1870, Lord Granville wrote to Sir John Young on the question as follows :

You express a hope that Her Majesty's Government will themselves pronounce on the question. You suggest an amnesty for political offences, leaving the execution of Thomas Scott (which presents the only real obstacle to that course) open to investigation, and you forward a memorandum framed by Sir G. Cartier in which he expresses an opinion that an amnesty should be issued in such terms as in all probability would lead to the acquittal of those concerned in that execution.

Well might the British Government be embarrassed. After all, as Lord Granville suggested, it only possessed a " technical authority." Later, his successor, Lord Kimberley, wrote :

DOWNING STREET,

Confidential. *August* 11, 1870.

SIR,—I have received your confidential Despatch of the 26th ultimo, enclosing a memorandum by Sir George Cartier on Lord Granville's despatch of June 30th on the subject of granting an amnesty to persons concerned in the Red River disturbances.

I have read Sir George Cartier's observations with the attention they deserve, but Her Majesty's Government cannot act in so grave a matter upon the authority of any individual member of the Canadian Government, however eminent.

If your Ministers should resolve that this is a question which they cannot undertake to decide, and that they must refer its decision to the Imperial Government, this resolution must be conveyed through you as the opinion of the Government of the Dominion, and Her Majesty's Government must be distinctly requested to assume the responsibility of dealing with the question.

I have the honour to be, sir, your most obedient, humble servant,

KIMBERLEY.

We may gather what the policy of the Macdonald Government was from the admissions of Mr. (afterwards Sir) Hector Langevin at the subsequent public inquiry. It was to shirk the question of amnesty as long as possible by alleging that it was out of their power to grant such and to throw the onus on the Imperial Government.

Thus the Ministry temporised and, Sir John's illness supervening, the matter slowly dragged along. "In every conversation I had with Archbishop Taché," reported Sir Hector Langevin, "he always stated to me that Sir George Cartier and Sir John Macdonald, when they received, on behalf of the Canadian Government, the delegates from the people of the North-West, had promised an amnesty, but on inquiry of my colleagues, Sir George Cartier and Sir John Macdonald, I must say that they always told me that no such promise was made."

Even after the death of Thomas Scott it is clear that Sir John Macdonald and several members of the Ministry believed that an amnesty was desirable, but, with the temper of the country what it was, politically inadvisable. So they clandestinely dangled the idea before the malcontents and permitted Archbishop Taché to believe that it was their intention to grant a pardon to Riel and his associates, while publicly they shrank from so fatal a measure. How were they to continue to sail between Scylla and Charybdis? How were they successfully to assuage the discontent of both factions? Sir John Macdonald, the "all-contriving," attempted the task.

What was Donald Smith's attitude? He made it quite

clear. "It was said," he stated, "that it was most desirable that these things should be settled, and that there should be an amnesty. I heard these statements frequently in conversation, both from Sir George Cartier and Sir John A. Macdonald; in fact, they were always made a subject of conversation whenever I was in Ottawa. I said that it was most unjust that this state of things should continue. They agreed with this view, but never said that they would obtain an amnesty. In a conversation with Sir John A. Macdonald about October 23rd, I submitted this to him. I told him that Archbishop Taché had informed me that an amnesty had been promised. He said no such promise had been given, and that he had letters from Lord Lisgar or Sir Clinton Murdock denying any promise on their part. He said, however, that when he was in England he would see about it."[1]

Events soon made action of some sort necessary. At the opening of Parliament in October, 1871, Mr. Langevin had two interviews with a large number of his supporters of the Government from the Province of Quebec. After exchanging their views and discussing the matter, Langevin declared that, if the amnesty were not granted within a reasonable time after the session of Parliament, he would resign his seat as a member of the Government, and that his colleague, Hon. Mr. Robitaille, would do the same. He had always thought that, in order to give peace and contentment to the North-West, a full amnesty was required; and that a full amnesty was highly impracticable as long as the excitement about the death of Thomas Scott was kept up. Wherefore, in order to allay this feeling, he had induced one or two of the most influential friends of Riel to use their influence with him to prevent his coming to Ottawa and taking his seat.

In the Manitoba Legislature on February 5th, 1872, a resolution was moved by Hon. Donald A. Smith, and carried

[1] Statement of Hon. D. A. Smith, *The Amnesty Report*, 1874.

unanimously, to the effect that "an humble address be presented to Her Most Gracious Majesty the Queen, praying that Her Majesty would be pleased to command that this House be made acquainted with the action already taken, or which it may be Her Majesty's Royal pleasure to take with the view of satisfying justice and the best interests of this country."

On February 6th, the day following the moving of the amnesty resolution in the Manitoba Legislature, Mr. Smith was requested by messenger to call immediately on Governor Archibald at his house on urgent business. He went and found the Governor and Archbishop Taché together. Governor Archibald informed him that there was danger of a rising of the Métis. There had been a meeting, and they had resolved to arm. The country was in a most dangerous condition. He said that he and the Archbishop had been talking the matter over, and that they had decided at the desire, and with the consent of, the Dominion Government to get some of the leading parties out of the way. Information had reached Fort Garry that there had been a reward offered by the Ontario Government for the apprehension of Riel and others. They said they had no money in the treasury of Manitoba, and Mr. Smith was asked if he could, and would, advance £600 sterling, it being distinctly understood between them that it would be "made good" by the Dominion Government. The money was to be paid by Mr. Smith to Archbishop Taché, Lieutenant-Governor Archibald saying that he would take upon himself the responsibility that the money should be repaid by the Dominion Government. Mr. Smith promptly agreed; he signed an order for the money, also agreeing that, in the event of repudiation, he would patriotically share the loss.

The money so procured was to be given to Riel and Lépine on condition that they leave the country. It was stipulated that they were to promise to remain away for a year, and should not, under any circumstances, return

until after the elections. As Mr. Smith was leaving for Ottawa in a few days, Governor Archibald requested him to inform the Dominion Government of the transaction. On his arrival, therefore, he spoke of it to Mr. Langevin and Sir George Cartier, as well as to the Prime Minister.

Now, how did Sir John Macdonald take this proposal? He already knew of and approved the previous expenditure of £500 for distribution amongst the half-breeds who had given him their assistance at a critical moment in January, 1869, and for which they were afterwards imprisoned by Riel, and had promised the repayment of this sum. His views regarding this further transaction can be given in his own words. Describing his interview with Mr. Smith in February, 1872, he said:

"He [Donald A. Smith] told me that Governor Archibald and himself and Bishop Taché had been apprehensive of an immediate outbreak of the Métis; that Governor Archibald had strongly expressed the opinion that the safety of the country depended on Riel's withdrawal from the country, and that his absence must be procured at all hazards; that the Lieutenant-Governor had no money at his disposal, but that if Mr. Smith would advance the necessary sum he had no doubt that the Dominion Government would repay it, and mentioned, as a proof of the strength of Mr. Archibald's feelings, that there was imminent danger and that the money must be expended; that Mr. Archibald said, 'If the Government repudiate the debt, I will pay half if you run the risk of the other half,' or something of that kind. Mr. Smith stated that he had advanced £600 sterling in consequence of this request, either to Mr. Archibald, to be given to Bishop Taché, or to Bishop Taché himself; I do not remember which.

"The largeness of the sum rather staggered me, especially as I had not heard the result of the previous payment; but I did not hesitate at once to tell Mr. Smith that if the Lieutenant-Governor, in the presence of such an exigency,

had pledged the faith of the Dominion Government, and the money was advanced on that pledge, he, Mr. Smith, or the Company should not be the losers and should be repaid. I stated that there might be a difficulty as to the means or fund out of which he would be repaid; that it would be very embarrassing, if not impossible, to go to Parliament at the time for the money, and I asked him to allow the matter to stand over, repeating the assurance for myself that it must be repaid him in some way or other.

"I was exceedingly unwilling to bring up the discussion of the Riel affair at all, in consequence of the embarrassment I felt as to the position of my Lower Canadian colleagues. I was anxious to avoid discussion lest the result might be a claim for amnesty, and, in the event of the Cabinet not agreeing upon action, resignation. The consideration of the payment was therefore postponed, as I thought it made little difference to a Company like the Hudson's Bay Company."

In the autumn Governor Archibald came to Ottawa, and told Mr. Smith that it had been arranged by the Government that either the £600 or £500 advanced to the Government should be repaid. Sir John, however, said it would not be convenient to have the debt paid until after the session of Parliament. All the discussions were in the same sense; such discussions and assurances were repeated also in the spring session of Parliament in 1873.

It was manifest that the Prime Minister wished all danger past before running the risk of possible disclosure to his political enemies. As Sir Richard Cartwright put it in his *Reminiscences,* "Had they known of his correspondence with Mr. Donald Smith and Archbishop Taché in reference to Riel, he would not have had a corporal's guard at his back from Ontario."

Thus time drifted on. The summer of 1873 came, and with it a blow to the fortunes of the Conservative Government so sudden and so crushing that the party did not recover for years.

CHAPTER XIV

THE "PACIFIC RAILWAY SCANDAL" (1871-73)

DURING the course of these absorbing events one question vital to the future of the Dominion had not been neglected. The best way, declared Sir John Macdonald, to preserve the North-West Territories to the Dominions was to construct a railway to the Pacific. While, therefore, the Premier was absent in Washington attending the Commission, Sir George Cartier, on April 11th, 1871, moved a resolution in the Dominion House of Commons that a Pacific railway be constructed by private enterprise, and that it be given liberal subsidies of land and money, the land grants to be alternate blocks, twenty miles deep, along the line, and the money subscription $30,000,000. Sir Alexander Galt supported Cartier's motion, and it was carried.

A leading spirit of one particular company which sought to obtain the benefits of this Pacific railway charter and grants was Senator David L. MacPherson, a member of a contracting firm which had constructed the Grand Trunk Railway west of Toronto, and a large owner of the stock of one of that railway's chief subsidiary lines.[1]

It was felt by the promoters and directors of the Grand Trunk Railway that they had a prior claim to construct and control the great Pacific railway which had now taken hold of the popular imagination. It was little likely, however, that such a prize would fail to attract the growing band of

[1] The Grand Trunk Railway was controlled by an English Board of Directors headed by Thomas Baring, Lord Wolverton, and others; and by a Canadian board consisting of Messrs. C. J. Brydges, James Ferrier, and William Molson. Cartier had been solicitor for the Grand Trunk Railway, and Sir A. Galt a leading promoter of that railway.

Canadian capitalists who had their headquarters at Montreal. Sir Hugh Allan and Mr. Smith were the life and soul of this group; and between them commercial relations had subsisted for some years.

Beginning his career as a merchant in a small way, Allan had developed into a prosperous contractor and shipowner. He figured in most of the leading commercial industrial enterprises of his time. Many years before he had founded the Montreal Steamship Company, which subsequently became the Allan Line, with steamers plying between Liverpool and the St. Lawrence. He was president of the Merchants' Bank, which had been chartered in 1864, and was president or vice-president of no fewer than twenty corporations, comprising telegraph, navigation, coal and iron, tobacco, cotton manufacture, rolling mills, paper mills, sewing machines, elevator and other concerns in which Mr. Smith, too, had a growing interest. He was also the first president of the Quebec, Montreal, Ottawa and Occidental Railroad, which had developed out of the Northern Colonisation Railroad, the titles of both of which are reminiscent of the time.

Associated with Sir Hugh Allan in his Canadian Pacific Railway scheme were a group of American capitalists—George W. McMullen, W. B. Ogden, George W. Case, W. G. Fargo, the banking firm of Winslow, Lanier and Company, Jay Cooke and others. Some of these American capitalists, such as Fargo, were heads of express companies; others were railway promoters or officials. Scott, for instance, controlled the Pennsylvania Railroad, and became chief promoter of the notorious Texas Pacific project, and was charged in this connection in 1876 with a wide corruption of Congress. This was the classic era of aggressive railway capitalists in America. Scott was opposed by another group headed by Collis P. Huntingdon, the Central and Southern Pacific's railway magnate. These two groups, furiously contesting for the division of land grants and subsidies in the

south-western States, set the pace and the example for lesser corporations.

Sir Hugh Allan had been made aware by Mr. Smith, amongst others, of the enormous possibilities of the Canadian North-West, and the potential value of the lands in the territory through which the projected railway would run. He was not, in this instance, swayed by any consideration of public welfare; he merely saw the opportunity of acquiring for himself and his associates a vast fortune out of Government subsidies and the eventual sale of the lands. In a word, he sought to repeat in Canada the plan and the methods which had been adopted by American capitalists with great success in the building of their railways. Nor did he shrink from the immediate adoption of those preliminaries of political intrigue and bribery which had grown to be almost a fixed rule of railway building in the adjoining Republic.

Early in the negotiations Allan shrewdly recognised that the presence of so large an alien element in the composition of his Canadian Pacific syndicate was a fatal drawback. The more he reflected on the magnitude of the undertaking and the vast prizes it offered, the more he perceived the soundness of the policy of amalgamating the interests of the Grand Trunk Railway, which, after all, was a purely British organisation, with his own. Moreover, the Grand Trunk Railway had for its champion no less a personage than Sir George Etienne Cartier, who had been solicitor of that company.

"Cartier," wrote Allan to one of his associates, "was naturally desirous of giving the contract for the Canadian Pacific Railway into the hands of parties connected with the Grand Trunk Railway, and to this end he fanned the flame of opposition to us." He added the pregnant fact that Cartier, the leader and chief of the French party, actually controlled forty-five Members of Parliament, who were wont to vote in a solid phalanx for all his measures. Seeing that

Photo: Swaine

MAJOR-GENERAL THE HON. SIR S. HUGHES

Minister of Militia and Defence of the Dominion of Canada

the normal Government majority was frequently less than forty-five, it was important to win over this compact body of Cartier's followers. Allan directed how measures must be taken to that end.

There was still another independent opposition group which would have to be disposed of. "The party in the interest of the Hudson's Bay Company," wrote Sir Hugh to his associate McMullen on December 29th, 1871, "consisting of Donald A. Smith, D. McInnes, G. Laidlaw, G. Stephen, Daniel Torrence (of New York), and one or two others, have given notice in the *Official Gazette* that they will apply for a charter to make a railroad from Pembina to Fort Garry. That is the only one that affects us."

On January 24th, 1872, Allan wrote to Charles M. Smith, of Chicago, and McMullen that his (Allan's) subscription of $1,450,000 to the stock of the proposed Canadian Pacific Railway Company "includes the sum of $200,000 furnished jointly by you and myself, to be transferred in whole or in part to Mr. C. J. Brydges on condition of his joining the organisation and giving it the benefit of his assistance and influence."

But Brydges was not to be won over so easily. In February Allan wrote to C. M. Smith:

> Since writing to you yesterday I have seen Mr. D. L. MacPherson, of Toronto, who is a member of the Dominion Senate, and rather an important person to gain over to our side. He has been applied to by our opponents, and uses that as a lever by which to obtain better terms from us. He insists on getting $250,000 of stock, and threatens opposition if he does not get it. You will remember he is one of those I proposed as Directors. I will do the best I can, but I think that McMullen, you, and myself will have to give up some of our stock to conciliate these parties.

Four days later Sir Hugh Allan wrote again to Charles M. Smith:

> "It seems pretty certain that in addition to money payments the following stock will have to be distributed: D. L. MacPherson, $100,000; A. B. Foster, $100,000; Donald A. Smith, $100,000;

J. J. C. Abbott, $50,000; John Shedden, $50,000; A. Allan, $50,000; C. S. Gzowski, $50,000; George Brown, $50,000; A. S. Hincks, $50,000; N. Nathan, £50,000; T. McGreevy, $50,000; total, $850,000.[1] Please say if this is agreeable to you. I do not think we can do with less, and may have to give more. I do not think we will require more than $100,000 in cash, but I am not sure yet. Who am I to draw on for money when it is wanted, and what proof of payment will be required? You are aware I cannot get receipts. Our Legislature meets on the 11th of April, and I am already deep in preparation for the game. Every day brings up some new difficulty to be encountered, but I hope to meet them all successfully. Write to me immediately.

P.S.—I think you will have to *go it blind* in the matter of money-cash payments. I have already paid $8,500, and have not a voucher and cannot get one.

Than this letter, could cynicism and flagrant corruption farther go?

It need hardly be said that in thus apportioning the sum of $100,000 to Mr. Donald A. Smith, Sir Hugh Allan had acted entirely without the latter's knowledge and consent; and the same is doubtless true of several of the other persons whose names were thus referred to.

In October, 1873, Mr. Smith wrote to Lord Iddesleigh from Fort Garry:

Anyone is at liberty, I suppose, to put down anyone else's name for a sum of money in a memorandum, a last will and testament, or any other document; but if any inference can be drawn from this mention of mine in a letter of Sir Hugh Allan, I have only to say that I never heard of it, that had I heard I would have scorned such a proposal, and that the last thing in the world I would have dreamt of doing would be to accept a penny's worth of stock, without an open and avowed equivalent, from Sir Hugh Allan or anyone else.

On one point Sir George Cartier had made his views clear:

Aussi longtemps que je vivrai et que je serai dans le Ministère, jamais une sacrée compagnie Americaine aura le controle du Pacifique; et je résignerai ma place de Ministre plutôt que d'y consentir.

[1] The total was really $700,000. Allan appears here a rather reckless juggler with figures.

"No Yankee Dictation"

On July 1st Allan wrote to Mr. Kennedy, an American capitalist in New York, that the cry "No Yankee dictation" had forced upon him the ostensible dropping of every American name from the Canadian Pacific Railway scheme.

Still, Cartier's opposition threatened trouble. Allan's retort was to carry the war into the enemy's country. In his own words, surely matchless for their audacity and indiscretion, "I found that means must be taken to influence the public, and I employed several young French writers to write it up in their own newspapers. I subscribed a controlling influence in the stock, and proceeded to subsidise the newspapers themselves, both editors and proprietors. I went to the country through which the road would pass, and called on many inhabitants. I visited the priests and made friends of them, and I employed agents to go among the principal people and talk it up. I then began to hold public meetings, and attended to them myself, making frequent speeches in French to them, showing them where their true interest lay. The scheme at once became popular. I formed a committee to influence the members of the Legislature. This succeeded so well that in a short time it had twenty-seven out of forty-five on whom I could rely, and the electors of the ward in this city, which Cartier himself represents, notified him that unless the contract for the Pacific Railway was given in the interests of Lower Canada, he need not present himself for re-election. He did not believe this, but when he came here and met his constituents, he found, to his surprise, that their determination was unchanged. He then agreed to give the contract."

Sir Hugh's methods were not without influence on Cartier. On July 30th, 1872, the latter addressed a "private and confidential" letter to Allan, as follows:

> The friends of the Government will expect to be assisted with funds in the pending elections, and any amount which you or your Company shall advance for that purpose shall be recouped to you. A memorandum of the immediate requirement is below.

This memorandum read :

NOW WANTED

Sir John A. Macdonald	$25,000
Hon. Mr. Langevin	15,000
Sir G. E. C.	20,000
Sir J. A. (add.)	10,000
Hon. Mr. Langevin	100,000
Sir G. E. C.	30,000

On August 7th, 1872, Allan wrote :

I have already paid away about $250,000, and will have to pay at least $50,000 before the end of the month. I don't even know if that will finish it, but hope so.

The scheme being promoted by Sir Hugh Allan had now reached the point when it was considered that the Government support was secure. There remained the necessity of attempting to unify the competing companies. On October 15th, 1872, a Provisional Board of Directors for the Canadian Pacific Railway Company were Senators A. B. Foster, John Hamilton, David Christie, and James Skead. The Hon. Donald A. Smith, representing a Manitoba constituency in the Dominion Parliament, was also named. So, too, were the following : Hon. J. J. Ross, M.P. and Legislative Councillor ; Hon. Chief Judge Coursel of Montreal ; Henry Nathan, M.P. for Victoria, B.C. ; Andrew Allan, brother of Sir Hugh ; Hon. Louis Archambault, M.P. and Dominion Minister of Agriculture, and sundry other members of Parliament.

Formidable as was this combination of men of political and other influence, the scheme failed. For the Interoceanic Railway Company refused to amalgamate, and Allan was driven to the necessity of organising an entirely new company.

So long as the two chief competing companies failed to come to terms of amalgamation, neither could command financial support from the Dominion Government. The formation of a new company by Sir Hugh Allan settled the

difficulty. On February 5th, 1873, the charter of this company was signed by the Governor-General. By its provisions the Canadian Pacific Railway Company pledged itself to build the railway within ten years from July 20th, 1871, in consideration of which it was to receive a land grant of 50,000,000 acres, and a subsidy of $30,000,000, payable from time to time in instalments. The company was allowed a capital of $10,000,000.

Duly the session of Parliament opened. On April 2nd the famous bombshell exploded. Lucius S. Huntingdon, M.P., rose in his place in the House of Commons and, in effect, accused Sir John A. Macdonald and the Government of having sold the charter of the Canadian Pacific Railway for a large sum of money to be used for election purposes. He closed a dramatic speech by demanding an investigating committee.

At first Sir John Macdonald refused to appoint such a committee. Eventually, however, he regarded it as expedient to do so. In this case the *personnel* was selected by the House of Commons itself. In the midst of its sessions a Montreal newspaper startled the community by publishing, at Huntingdon's instance, the confidential telegrams and letters written by Sir Hugh Allan to McMullen.

"It has never been clearly explained," Sir Richard Cartwright wrote long afterwards, "how and why Sir John allowed these very compromising letters of Sir Hugh Allan to fall into his enemies' hands, when he could apparently have got possession of them by paying a comparatively small sum of money. He may have thought the offer was a trap. I do not know, and the reason remains more or less of a mystery, the more so as Sir John showed in other ways that he was in a temper to stop at nothing if he could escape a hostile verdict."

As a matter of fact, Sir Hugh Allan was a man of strict business habits, and nothing was brought out in the evidence to show an actual sale of the charter of the Pacific Railway.

What came out clearly, however, was that the Chicago broker, McMullen, was a blackmailer of the deepest hue, and a man totally devoid of honour. When he had sufficiently wormed himself into Sir Hugh's confidence, he threatened to publish his truly ingenuous letters. After blackmailing Allan and selling him back his letters for a large price, McMullen straightway repaired to Sir Hugh Allan's enemies, and placed in their hands, also for a good round sum, copies of the same letters and telegrams. His reason for betraying him was that he found that Allan's influence with the Government was not as potent as he had been led to suppose.

Howbeit, this fatal partnership had been dissolved some time before the railway charter was granted.[1]

Sir John A. Macdonald was called by the investigating committee as a witness.

He frankly admitted that he had received funds from Allan for use in election purposes. The Dominion elections were coming on, and he and Sir Charles Cartier had discussed the question of subcriptions to the Conservative party's central fund at Toronto. He continued:

> We spoke of several in Montreal who would be likely, from party attachment, or from interest, or from other moving cause, to aid us; and Sir Hugh's name was, of course, mentioned, as being the richest man in Canada, and the one most interested in procuring the return of members in favour of the large—I may say the Imperial—policy which had characterised our administration. Aid had come to the fund from Montreal from several quarters, and I was not surprised to receive a communication from Sir Hugh Allan that he would contribute twenty-five thousand dollars to the Ontario fund.
>
> As regards myself, I was made the medium through which the subscriptions were paid, but it might, had he so chosen, have been

[1] "The latter [McMullen] had been playing a deep game all the while, and his crafty manipulation of the correspondence led the erstwhile shrewd Canadian capitalist to write a number of committal letters. These letters McMullen carefully copied for future use, and then, as if to show how utterly insincere he was, he openly boasted that he had Sir Hugh Allan in his power. There was no evidence to show that the large sums of money which Allan had advanced were furnished in consideration of his receiving the Pacific Railway charter."—Lord Dufferin, *Memorandum*.

remitted through any other channel. I did not consider it at all an unusually large subscription from a man of his wealth. Others, with not a twentieth part of his means, subscribed from five to ten thousand dollars. I, however, of course expected that Sir Hugh would feel himself called upon to contribute to the Quebec fund.

The Conservative party in England does not repudiate the action of the brewers and distillers and the Association of Licensed Victuallers in electing candidates in their interests, and we did not repudiate or reject the influence of the railway interest. Our misfortune was that, by the base betrayal of these private communications, the names of certain members of the Government, including myself, were mixed up in the obtaining of these subscriptions. Had this betrayal not taken place, it would have been only known that Sir Hugh Allan, and the railways with which he had been connected, had taken a decided line in supporting one party in preference to another by their influence and money.

Sir John further testified that the Government had asked Donald Smith to be a member of the Canadian Pacific Board. Smith was "the representative man of the Hudson's Bay Company in Canada," and the "Government thought it would be a great advantage to get the assistance and influence of that powerful corporation in England, if the company had to go to that market to borrow. . . ." He went on: "When the Government came to the conclusion to exclude members of Parliament, Mr. Smith was excluded, and upon his own recommendation Mr. McDermott, a wealthy merchant in Winnipeg, was appointed in Smith's place."

Excitement on account of what was called the "Pacific Railway Scandal" ran high in the whole country. On October 24th, Parliament was to meet. The situation was so critical that Sir John A. Macdonald set out to rally to the division every member of the party, every supporter. During the early part of October Mr. Smith was in the Far West, engaged in visiting certain establishments of the Company of which he was Chief Commissioner. At Fort Carlton a letter from Sir John reached him, announcing the date of Parliament's meeting, and stating that he relied

especially upon Mr. Smith's being in his place to support him. "Upon you and the influence you can bring to bear," wrote Sir John, "may depend the fate of the administration." On receipt of this urgent message the Chief Commissioner made a record journey from Fort Carlton to Winnipeg, whence he telegraphed to Sir John that he would be in Ottawa by October 23rd. During the latter part of his journey Mr. Smith had ample leisure to peruse the evidence before the Pacific Railway Commission, as given in the Toronto newspapers.

On arrival at the capital on the eve of what was destined to be a memorable session, the member for Selkirk received a message that the Prime Minister particularly wished to see him in one of the committee rooms. He went at once, and found Sir John in rather an excited state. The Prime Minister was delighted, he said, to see him, and grateful for his having made such an effort to be there. He then said: "This is altogether a wretched business, Mr. Smith. Naturally, the Opposition are going to make the most of it. We are being made the scapegoats of Allan and that scoundrel McMullen."

Mr. Smith answered that it was indeed a grave juncture. He had come up at the Premier's request, and would loyally await his statement to the House. If that statement proved, as he hoped, to be satisfactory, none of Sir John's supporters would vote for him more cheerfully than he. But it was essential that public, and not private, interests should be considered.

Sir John then said: "If my friends do or do not support me, I intend appealing to the country, and I am as sure as I stand here that Ontario will support me to a man." He repeated this several times.

Before this interview between Mr. Smith and the Premier concluded, the subject of Riel and Lépine and the money advanced by Mr. Smith to keep them out of the country, was mentioned. Sir John said: "You will be up here next

week, and we shall have it settled." Mr. Smith expressed himself as in no haste to receive the money. Nevertheless, he could not conceal from himself that there were certain eventualities in prospect which might make restitution on the part of Government difficult and perhaps impossible. On the day following the House met.

In reply to the speech from the Throne, Mr. Mackenzie moved the following amendment:

> And we have to acquaint his Excellency that by their course in reference to the investigation of the charges preferred by Mr. Huntingdon, in his place in this House, and under the facts disclosed in the evidence laid before us, His Excellency's advisers have merited the severe censure of this House.

Mackenzie, in moving the amendment, reviewed the whole case in a speech of extreme moderation.

Mr. James Macdonald, Conservative member for Pictou, moved as an amendment to the amendment:

> And we desire to assure His Excellency that after consideration of the statement made in the evidence before us, and while we regret the outlay of money by all political parties at Parliamentary elections, and desire the most stringent measures to put an end to the practice, we at the same time beg leave to express our continued confidence in His Excellency's advisers, and in their administration of public affairs.

Days of heated argument ensued. Long before the division came Sir John Macdonald and Mr. Tupper had reason to know how the members regarded the action of the Government. Five years afterwards Mr. Smith told a House wrought to a high pitch of excitement:

> Members of the late Government approached me before the eventful November 4th, and wished to sound me and know how I was going to vote in this matter. Some days in advance of that time, I was requested to meet the hon. member for Charlevoix in the Speaker's room, and did meet him there. An hon. member from the other House—the Hon. Mr. Campbell, a gentleman for whom I have a very high respect personally—also met me there, and to both these gentlemen during a long interview, at which was present also another

gentleman who was then likewise a member of this House—Mr. Nathan, a personal friend of mine—I declared that I could not vote for the amendment to the amendment that was offered by Mr. Macdonald of Pictou. I said, "No, *I cannot do so; I cannot possibly do so; I cannot conscientiously do so.*"

On the occasion referred to, in the Speaker's chamber, I said that I could not support the Government, but I offered and proposed that there should be another amendment, and a very different one. The Government should frankly confess their fault to the House, and then, if the country condoned it, it would be a very different thing. That is what I proposed to the hon. gentleman, and it was reduced to writing at the time.

Yet, despite this, Sir John Macdonald and his colleagues still professed to believe that Mr. Smith's vote was uncertain and that it might yet be cast in their favour.

A distinguished Liberal member of Parliament, who was present on the memorable day, has left on record a spirited account of the intervention of the member for Selkirk.

"On the seventh day of the battle Mr. Donald A. Smith, of Manitoba, took the floor. He had preserved during the whole exciting debate a sphinx-like silence. He was known as a staunch supporter of the Government, and his silence was construed into loyalty to his chief. He assured the House he had but little to say, and all waited anxiously, both sides apparently equally intent upon hearing that little. His opening remarks were complimentary to Sir John and his great service to Canada, and with that the faces of the Opposition lengthened.

"But Mr. Smith had not finished. With respect to the transaction between the Government and Sir Hugh Allan, he did not consider that the First Minister took the money with any corrupt motive. He felt that the leader of the Government was incapable of taking money from Sir Hugh Allan for corrupt purposes. And now we thought we were done for. But wait a moment. He would be most willing to vote confidence in the Government (loud cheers from the

Government side) could he do so conscientiously (great Opposition cheers).

" ' Conscientiously '—it was a bolt from the blue to the Government side of the House. To the Opposition it was a song of deliverance, and we all concluded that a Scottish conscience was a good thing to keep on hand.

" It was great news for Number Nine—' We will catch the Old Fox[1] yet,' said Rymal. He was caught. Donald Smith was used to trapping foxes in Labrador and the North-West—his speech did the trick."[2]

A year later Mr. Smith wrote to one of his chief supporters in Winnipeg :

> For two days and nights I struggled with myself over the course I should take. On the one hand were my admiration for Sir John Macdonald, my grateful sense of his services to the country, my confidence in his ability and statesmanship. On the other hand was a clear perception of the terrible political mistake which had been committed, and the evil effect it might have on the community. But the chief reflection which led me to vote as I did was that I had been sent into Parliament to represent my constituents, and I soon had ample reason to know how they regarded the affair. I had, therefore, only one course to take; it was a severe wrench to my personal feelings, but I took that course, let the cost be what it might.

* * * * * *

After the vote the Prime Minister and Mr. Smith met in a committee room. Sir John checked the other's attempt to speak by saying : " You must be repaid that loan." Mr. Smith said that it was now of no consequence to him. To continue in Mr. Smith's own words : " He [Sir John] said that ' The matter should have been arranged long ago, but it will be arranged now, if you will just merely, as a matter of course, write me a note stating (in order that we may have something to show) that it was paid to Archbishop Taché, at the instance of Governor Archibald, and you shall receive a cheque, or rather, the money to-morrow morning.'

[1] Sir John Macdonald.

[2] Sir George Ross, *Getting into Parliament and After.*

"I immediately wrote and posted the note required, mentioning the amount required, with interest at 7 per cent.,[1] from February, 1872. The note was in the terms Sir John had told me. I had not asked for the money in this conversation. This was the last conversation I had with Sir John about it in which he referred to giving this money. The payment of the money was spoken of by Dr. Tupper the next morning, and he said it would be repaid. And in conversation with Mr. Pope the same evening, he said that Sir John had said, in the previous week, that the money must be paid. The money has never been paid. I have had no conversation with any member of the late Government about it. I have stated to members of the present Government that the money should be paid, but I have made no claim for it, but I consider that Sir John should see it paid. The Dominion Government had an account with the Hudson's Bay Company, which acted as the Government bankers in the territory. The money was not a transaction of my own, it was only in acting as the banker of the Government that the money was advanced, although if not paid by the Government, I might consider I should make it good to the Company. I say this because I have not any written order or authority from Mr. Archibald for this payment. I did not consider that I was asked to advise upon the policy of these parties leaving the country, but simply to supply the necessary funds. I may mention here that both Governor Archibald and Sir John expressed themselves strongly that faith had not been kept by Riel and Lépine in remaining away as they had promised."

This last is a reference to Riel's action in 1872, in contesting an election for Provencher in 1872, afterwards yielding to Sir George Cartier, who had suffered defeat in Quebec. Subsequently, on Cartier's lamented death, he was elected for that constituency, and actually travelled to

[1] This was then the current rate of interest in Winnipeg on loans made by the Company.

Ottawa for the purpose of being sworn in a member of the House of Commons. At this time he was a fugitive from justice. A true bill had been found against him as one of the murderers of Thomas Scott by the Grand Jury of Manitoba, and a price set upon his head. He succeeded in taking the oath and in writing his name in the book before the discovery of his presence in the city became known. In the hurry and confusion of the moment he was allowed to slip away from the House undetected. For days he remained hiding in the capital. The exertions put forward by the officers can hardly have been very great, for Riel was frequently seen, and his presence in the capital was no secret. But it was felt undesirable to imprison the outlaw; neither the Government nor the Opposition seemed desirous of taking action. Riel was accordingly permitted to escape. Mr. Mackenzie Bowell, M.P., an Orange Grand Master who boasted considerable local influence, moved in the House that Louis Riel be expelled from the House of Commons. The motion was carried, and though Riel was returned from his constituency at a subsequent period, he was never allowed to take his seat in Parliament.

To the following letter from Mr. Archibald, then Lieutenant-Governor of Nova Scotia, it is only necessary to add that eventually the Company was reimbursed for the sum advanced by its Chief Commissioner.

GOVERNMENT HOUSE, HALIFAX, N.S.,
December 20, 1873.

MY DEAR MR. SMITH,—Your private letter of the 10th has enlightened me on several points on which I am ill-informed. I am *truly astonished* at one or two of the things you mention. After all that had taken place, I could hardly have believed it possible that two of the matters you refer to could have been left as they are. There can be no excuse for such neglect. Nobody knew better than Sir John, or admitted more unreservedly, the essential service rendered to the Government in the steps taken to get them rid of an excitement which would have been found to be beyond their control at the time, and when friends stepped into the gap and assumed risks, they should

not have been left in that position an instant longer than was absolutely necessary. The matter should have been arranged at once, the more so that it was so often pressed. The same may be said of the compensation to the loyal French, which, to my certain knowledge, was arranged for at the time I mentioned to you. I had assumed that both these matters had been disposed of long ago. It is really unpardonable.

If only the unfortunate cause of all these troubles had had the sense to see, as others saw for him, that the true solution of the question both in his own interests and in the interest of his half-breed friends, and of the Dominion, was to keep himself in the background till the storm had blown over, all these difficulties would have vanished. Public attention would have been averted from him, and in the course of a few years the people would have begun to think that, if there had been an insurrection and a great crime, it was a happy feature of a rebellion against English authority that it held its own for ten months, and had but one crime to charge itself with: that is, admitting that stealing a lot of your Hudson's Bay goods, and appropriating so much of other people's property as they found convenient, were not to be ranked under this category. There is no doubt that a very short time would have been needed to bring about a better state of feeling, and then he and his friends could have claimed an amnesty which, whether it was promised or not, was implied in the treaty, but which, whether it was promised or not, no Government could venture to give till the passions of the moment had cleared away a little and left them free to act in the true interest of the people of the Dominion.—I am, dear Mr. Smith, very sincerely yours,

ADAMS G. ARCHIBALD.

Thereafter for several years the member for Selkirk stood forth an Independent in politics. And this was infinitely more congenial to him. His temperament was altogether opposed to his being a "party man."

As to his own position in the Selkirk constituency and Manitoba generally, it had gone on improving ever since his qualities had become known and esteemed. In September, 1871, the local newspaper, the *Manitoban,* took occasion to refer to the wonderful change which had taken place in public opinion relative to Mr. Smith.

Nineteen or twenty months ago, perhaps no man ever came before a constituency asking their suffrages under more inauspicious cir-

cumstances than did that gentleman. His opponents were unscrupulous—the old anti-Hudson's Bay Company cry was used to its utmost stretch—his efforts during the troubles were made use of to his disadvantage—every means was used to do him injustice—but he came through it all. He met his opponents face to face in public meetings—he demolished every accusation brought against him, and was elected.

But it is since the election that the most notable change has occurred. Those who were his most bitter political opponents before are now his warmest friends, and perhaps there is no man in the Province to-day so thoroughly relied upon as Mr. Smith. His conduct in the local House last session proved him a man thoroughly capable of taking a lead in legislative action; his thorough straightforward and honest course in both Houses has proved him a man to be trusted; and most people feel that the day is not far distant when Mr. Smith will be forced to take a much more prominent position politically in the Province than he occupies at present. In this case, therefore, we conceive there would have been little use in making a great cry and bother of the election of a gentleman who, by his sterling worth, can do and has done so much for himself.

In November, 1871, Mr. Smith, as M.P. for Selkirk, had an opportunity of addressing his constituents for the first time since his election in the early spring. His reception was hearty, and when his conduct was called in question by a Mr. Mulvey, his rebuttal of the accusation made against him was convincing. The accusation amounted to this: that though he had pledged himself on the hustings to use every endeavour to obtain for the old Scottish and English settlers an interest in the land similar to that held by the half-breeds, he had failed to do so. Mr. Smith, in reply, and in the most emphatic terms, declared that in the House he rose and insisted that the Government should favourably consider the claims of the old settlers, and that Sir George Cartier had promised such consideration.

Early in the following summer it was announced that, by the member for Selkirk's importunity, an appropriation of $5,000 had been made for the improving of the navigation of Red River; and also that by his untiring efforts he had secured the rights and claims of the old settlers.

In the performance of his duties in the Legislative Assembly, Mr. Smith was untiring. Measure after measure he introduced or supported for the good of the community. Of his introduction of the Amnesty Bill in 1871, a fellow-member, Mr. O'Donnell, declared :

I listened with much pleasure to the sentiments which Mr. Donald Smith uttered in the Assembly this day. The silence with which the whole House listened to his words of eloquence showed that they carried conviction to every hearer, and he has shown us during the past few months that he has most enduring faith in British supremacy.

He enjoys the high and enviable position of being the representative man in this Province. No man can deny that he possesses a wider influence than any other private individual in the country, and he will, I feel sure, soon take a foremost rank amongst the statesmen of Canada.

A sound prediction !

On February 26th, 1872, a great banquet was arranged in Mr. Smith's honour, attended by many of the leading citizens of Winnipeg and district. In proposing the toast of the guest of the evening, the Chairman observed :

I find myself presiding over the most influential meeting ever convened in the Province of Manitoba. When I look around me I see representatives not only from every section of the community, but representatives of every shade of politics.

Mr. Donald Smith represents more things than one. First of all he represents the Hudson's Bay Company. In the olden times the Hudson's Bay Company did mean politics, but those days are gone. And even referring to the past, and looking to Mr. Donald A. Smith as a representative of the Hudson's Bay Company, some see in him a representative of a corporation which has not only made this a Province, but which has also kept it. But now we have it as the part of the British territory which is to be the Egypt of the North-American continent, and which is going to supply grain enough to feed the whole of Europe, if needs be. And in this respect our guest is welcome here to-night heartily.

In another respect, Mr. Donald A. Smith is a representative man. He is representative of the County of Selkirk, and we will keep him that representative. The county has yet many interests to be attended to at Ottawa, and he is just the man to attend to them. We

all require a cool, clear-headed business man like Mr. Donald A. Smith to watch our interests at Ottawa; and I defy anyone to point out another man in Ontario or Quebec who, from position, habits, and interests, is so well able to attend to those interests. In another and a very important respect, that hon. gentleman is also a representative man, and that is as to the future interests of the Province. Development is going on around us, every day indicates further progress, and in aiding that development we have seen Mr. Donald A. Smith at the head of those in Canada who have recently held meetings on the subject. Before five years, gentlemen, through the efforts of men like Mr. Smith, we will have railway and steamboat facilities.

Mr. Smith's response to this toast was, so far, his "greatest oratorical effort," as he said playfully in a letter to his wife.

When I look around me and see here representatives of every nationality and every interest in the Province—when I see among the most respected of my hearers those who remind me of the past, of days long gone by, when civilisation first took root in this land, and they were its honest, patient, hardworking pioneers—when I see around me those who were settlers in the land in the early days when the North-West and Hudson's Bay Companies ruled supreme here—when I see these and others who remind me of the worth and goodness of the past—and when I see, too, many whose coming here is not so remote, but who yet cannot be called settlers of to-day—when, gentlemen, I see an assemblage such as this met to do honour to myself, I feel I am not worthy of this great honour.

This gathering itself, in its numbers, influence, power, is one of the marks of that new era on which we have entered. Look back half a century ago, and what was it? A wild peopled by savages, a noble, high-spirited race in some respects, but utterly without culture or comforts or definite purpose. If to-day we have to congratulate ourselves on great and growing changes, we must not forget that to the early settlers we are indebted for that of which we now reap the fruits. They were the forerunners of civilisation here, and, quite unostentatiously, while seeking to better themselves, they helped to make this land one of which their countrymen might be proud. To men such as these we must accord our fullest gratitude.

Nor in speaking of these must we forget others more recently come amongst us, and those of all origins who have been born and have grown up in the country, whom we regard as brothers and to whom we extend the right hand of fellowship and friendship, for they are those who can assist us in making this country what it is

capable of becoming, one of the finest in the whole world. We are all now one people, and as such must stand firm and undivided. There have been, it is true, differences in the past—and (Sir, I am not going to degenerate into politics in making this allusion) there must ever be differences among men—for when we do not know one another, how is it possible there can be any mutual understanding? But when we come into close contact, and we find our fellow-men animated by the same feelings of friendliness as we ourselves are, our little differences are readily reconciled.

Reference has been made to my connection with the Hudson's Bay Company. Well, gentlemen, I am not a little proud of that connection. I am here, it may be said, at the close of the first era in the history of that great Company. If I may be pardoned a somewhat personal allusion, I would say that about ninety years ago my own relatives and friends were among the originators of the North-West Company, which subsequently amalgamated with the Hudson's Bay Company. It is a somewhat singular coincidence that I should see the last of the old regime of the Hudson's Bay Company; and have been empowered by that Company to aid it in taking up a new lease of prosperity—a prosperity in which all the present and future inhabitants of this land are closely concerned. For the interests of that Company and the other Provinces which will grow out of this great North-West are intimately bound up, and they must be prosperous.

The people of this North-West Territory are justly proud of their country. They are determined—and their children will, I doubt not, follow in this determination—to make this a happy, a free, and a glorious country—the finest under the flag of which we all present are proud.

It is undoubtedly a country to awaken pride. See the vast and fertile plains stretching between us and the Rocky Mountains. Look westward, northward, and say, Is not this land of ours a goodly heritage—with its gold and silver, coal and minerals almost without end, and, beyond and before all, with a soil and a climate unsurpassed on this globe, and with an abundance of natural facilities for transport? It is a land needing only the sturdy industrious tillers of the soil to bring forth abundance, not for their use alone, but to send to the other Provinces of the Dominion, and beyond, to be wafted across the sea to gladden the hearts of the poor in other countries.

All we need here to open up the country is population and increased railway facilities, and these will come, and, gentlemen, they will come soon. Before long we will be, through the aid of railways, almost within speaking distance of the other Provinces. The pros-

pect is certainly a bright one, and we may well congratulate ourselves on the future of the country, and bend all our energies unitedly to its development. If we have not known each other so well as we might in the past, our course can be a wiser and more friendly course in the future. We can atone for all the regrets of the past by a determination to think better of each other hereafter.

Reading these words after a lapse of more than forty years, one is affected by the insistency with which the speaker struck the same note, and the constancy with which he maintained it. There is in it almost the antique minstrel touch, with the oft-repeated burden :

O come into the Golden West,
The fairest of all lands, I ween ;
She stands and bids you be her guest,
Though darkling surges roll between.

There are passages in it nearly identical with those delivered a year or two before he died. As was said of an older minstrel : " Others may have sung sweetlier of his country, but none, methinks, so dearly or so long."

* * * * * *

The Dominion general elections of 1872 were hotly contested in Manitoba. Mr. Smith was opposed in Selkirk by a Mr. Wilson, who, however, only received sixty-two votes. In Lisgar Dr. Schultz was also re-elected ; while in Provencher Sir George Cartier, whose defeat in Montreal East was a matter of national regret, was returned by acclamation, Louis Riel having, as we have seen, retired in his favour. Alas, however, Cartier was already a dying man.

Election day was marked by riot and disorder in Winnipeg. Aided by a number of rough characters, Mr. Smith's opponents set out to intimidate the electors, so that from the opening of the polls the whole day was a continuous series of *mêlées,* including two attempts to capture the poll-books. At St. Boniface, on the other side of the river, pistols and axe-handles were freely used on Mr. Smith's supporters. Happily, no serious injuries were inflicted.

Before the day was over it was found necessary to call out the militia to defend the poll in Winnipeg, the small police force being powerless to cope with the rioters. The local chief of police was seriously wounded, and others of the force sustained injury : the whole day's lawlessness culminating in the destruction of the printing offices of the *Manitoban* and *Le Métis,* upon which the mob vented its rage " in vindication of their rights as free-born Britons."

Following the resignation of the Macdonald Ministry, another election took place. Writing from Norway House, October, 1873, Chief Factor Robert Hamilton said :

> I hear there is to be an immediate dissolution of the Dominion House which will cause great excitement all over the country. Mr. Smith seems doubtful whether he will offer himself again as a candidate for Selkirk ; but I rather fancy he will, as I believe it is necessary that the Company should have some representative in the Commons of Canada. You will see by the papers that Mr. Smith took a very prominent part in the overturn of the late Ministry. Some bigoted partisans say he was much to blame for the action he took, but honest men, who are not bigoted, are unanimous in his praise.

On Cartier's death Riel was again elected member for Provencher at a by-election. The cause of this persistent action of Riel's friends was probably a desire to strengthen his position in meeting the charge of murder which hung over him. But it was clear that the immediate effect was to aggravate the hostility felt towards the half-breed leader, both in Manitoba and the East.

At last, on the application of the Attorney-General of Manitoba, true bills were found against Riel and Lépine for the murder of Thomas Scott on March 14th, 1870. Lépine was in consequence arrested and committed to jail, but was subsequently released on bail. As Riel had concealed himself and the warrant could not be served, the Attorney-General proceeded to process of outlawry against him.

The discussion, which followed this, renewed the feelings

of irritation which divided the English and French populations, and compelled the attention of the Government and the Legislature to what had become a dangerous and anomalous condition of affairs in respect to the persons implicated in the murder of Scott.

On April 1st, 1874, Mr. Smith moved that a select committee of nine members be appointed by the House of Commons "to inquire into the causes of the difficulties which existed in the North-West in 1869 and 1870, and to those which have retarded the granting of the amnesty announced in the Proclamation issued by the late Governor-General of Canada, Sir John Young; and further, to inquire whether, and to what extent, other promises of amnesty have since been made; with power to send for persons, papers, and records." Of this Amnesty Commission Donald A. Smith, M.P., was chosen Chairman.

On April 15th a debate lasting two days arose on a motion of Mr. Mackenzie Bowell to the effect that Louis Riel, having been charged with murder, having fled from justice, and having failed to obey an order of the House of Commons to attend in his place on the 9th instant, be expelled from the House. The resolution was carried.

In September, 1874, the Amnesty Committee issued its report, which, as Professor Chester Martin observes, "proved of greater value to the historical investigator than to a perplexed Ministry." It remained, therefore, for the Governor-General, Lord Dufferin, to cut the Gordian knot by commuting the sentence upon Lépine to two years' imprisonment and forfeiture of political rights. Riel was declared an outlaw, and after a term of pretended insanity at Longue Pointe, he crossed the American border and disappeared from view until the rebellion of 1885 caused him to re-emerge as leader of the half-breeds. For this he paid the death penatly at Regina in September of that year.

16 November 1885

CHAPTER XV[1]

HEAD OF THE FUR TRADE (1870-74)

LET us now turn from Donald Smith, the rising politician and capitalist, to present his activities as head of the Hudson's Bay Company in Canada. Before me lie many hundreds, nay thousands, of letters written to and from the Chief Commissioner during a period of nearly half a century, not merely when he occupied that important office, but when he had risen above it to become Governor of the Company in 1889. This correspondence between himself and the widely scattered officers from Labrador to the Yukon, who looked to him as their champion as well as their official superior, well repays perusal, for it affords us, as nothing else can, an intimate glimpse into the conditions and *personnel* of the Canadian fur trade of the period.

CHIEF FACTOR HAMILTON *to* CHIEF FACTOR RANKIN.

NORWAY HOUSE,
December 21, 1872.

I hear that Mr. Smith has again been returned by a large majority for the Dominion Parliament. Of course, I am glad that since he did come forward he was victorious, but I would much rather see him retired from political life, as the business of the fur trade is sufficient to give full occupation to any one man who holds the position of Chief Commissioner.

The fur trade, as it existed when Mr. Smith became Chief Commissioner, originated in 1821, and its members represented the proprietary of the North-West Company of Montreal, which coalesced in that year with the Hudson's

[1] In the preparation of this chapter and Chapter XX I have been greatly assisted by Mr. Roderick MacFarlane, of Winnipeg, late Chief Factor in the Hudson's Bay Company's service, to whom I wish to acknowledge my indebtedness.

Bay Company of England. The object of the coalition was to extinguish the ruinous rivalry which had subsisted for many years between a body of capitalists holding a monopoly in London, and an association of traders conducting an opposition business in the Indian country; also to give the latter the legal status of the former, and to secure for them a fair remuneration for their services. The Hudson's Bay Company was to provide the capital; the officers of the fur trade were to be the working or wintering partners.

By gradual and almost insensible modifications the original scheme became greatly altered; so that while the position of the wintering partners of the fur trade to the shareholders remained as originally constituted, their relation to the business originally contributed in 1821 as their share of the enterprise and their consequent actual remuneration has been altered to their disadvantage.

Towards the shareholders their relation has remained the same, because two-fifths of the annual profits of the Company continued to be their share; but after 1870 their business was thrown open to the whole world—they were practically debarred from fur trading pursuits over a large portion of the original field, in consequence of the surrender by the Company of their chartered monopoly, and of extinction of the trade in those portions of the territory available for settlement, as well as its deterioration in districts where opposition fur trading came to prevail.

The grievance was felt to be greater because in the lapse of time since 1821 the remuneration of every class of servants, excepting that to which the commissioned officers belonged, has advanced—in some instances very largely indeed; and because the success of their exertions has so enhanced the position of the Company in England as to enable its stock to command a very high premium. This fact has become directly instrumental in damaging the prospects of the traders, through the advent of new shareholders, who,

in many cases ignorant of the altered circumstances of the trade and country, having obtained their interest at a high price, have looked to the trade to obtain a profit on their investment, proportioned to its success in the past and to the price they have paid for it.

We have already seen that among the events which have occurred to modify the original position of the traders, the most important was that which took place in 1863, when the entire body of "sleeping partners" sold their interest in the Company to strangers, at a price of three hundred per cent. on the par value of their stock; and the nominal capital of the Company became £2,000,000 instead of £500,000 sterling, by a mere arbitrary act and without any addition to its assets.

The commissioned officers of the fur trade knew nothing of this monster transaction till it was completed. They were then informed that they had no interest in the matter, as their relation to the shareholders, as defined by the Deed Poll, remained unaffected. To this view the officers "did not then assent, and have never assented; but on the contrary have ever held that the change was one in which they and their successors were vitally interested."

CHIEF TRADER RODERICK MACKENZIE *to* D. A. SMITH

March 27, 1871.

As you will be by this time in London on behalf of the Commissioned Officers, I sincerely trust you will be able to ascertain the truth of the fact alleged by Mr. Isbister that at the time of the sale in 1863 Governor Berens and the Committee allocated the sum of £90,000 to form a fund, out of which the active and retired wintering partners were to be recompensed in the event of their making a protest against the sale, concerning which they had not been consulted.[1]

[1] Some time after the old Proprietors of the Hudson's Bay Company sold out their interests in 1863, to the new Concern, for *a million and one half pounds sterling*, it was currently reported (and no doubt Governor Lord Strathcona, heard the rumour) that the former Governor and Committee left the sum of *ninety thousand pounds* with, and under the control of, their successors in office, for the purpose of pacifying them, should the active and retired Wintering Partners in this country give trouble in regard to the effected sale change; but as the latter knew nothing of this secret arrangement, and also failed to make as vigorous a KICK as had been anticipated, the money was never disbursed, and probably went into the general business. In 1865, however,

Such an action would be entirely in line with what we now know to have been the old Committee's fears on the subject. If the statement is true and this contingency fund was created, where is it now? Why has it not been disbursed?

To this a reply was a long time in forthcoming, Mr. Smith having in the interval returned from meeting the shareholders in London.

To Chief Trader Roderick MacKenzie[1]

November 14, 1871.

Your letter of the 27th of March last duly reached me when I was in London, but as I was then deeply engaged in affairs demanding immediate attention I put it aside for reply when I could do so to advantage.

I may say that I have for some time been aware of the report to which you refer, of a special fund being set aside by the former Governor and Committee at the time of the sale of the Company in 1863; but what basis there was for the report, was a little difficult to ascertain, whatever my own private opinion might be, without an examination of the Company's books, a privilege which the Committee shewed little inclination to extend to me, and I felt I could not prudently insist upon. Fortunately the issue made it unnecessary, and I was able, after much heated discussion, to make such terms as, if not all we felt we deserved, the Committee and shareholders could be persuaded, without a legal process, to give.

You may rest assured that I employed every argument at my disposal, and my personal friendship with the Governor was of much service. But you will understand that in a corporation of this kind there are forces which even the Governor cannot control.

when the Officers on Active Service insisted on a *Guarantee*, the then Governor and Committee agreed to give them this at the rate of £275 sterling per 1-85th share, for the *five years* from *Outfit* 1865 *to* 1869 *inclusive*. They had never asked for, or obtained the consent of the Shareholders, therefore, very likely because of their belief that the *unclaimed* £90,000 would enable them to meet any demands that might arise thereunder, and also explain matters satisfactorily. Unfortunately, however, for us, by 1869 Governor Head and two or three of his associate Directors had died; the first Riel Insurrection broke out that Outfit, as a consequence of the transfer of the Company's Territories to Canada, and Governor Mactavish, who was fully acquainted with the Guarantee and the Fur Trade Rights, departed this life in July, 1870, and no new man, however able, could possibly grasp everything at a bound. In 1863, Sir Edmund Head assured the Commissioned Officers that their Fur Trade interests would not be adversely affected by the change in the Company's proprietorship.—*Memorandum* addressed by Chief Factor Roderick MacFarlane to the Governor and Committee, 1877.

[1] In the extracts from the general correspondence now to be given, it will be understood that where the name of either writer or recipient is omitted the etter is to or from the Chief Commissioner.

The surrender to the Crown of the chartered rights and privileges held by the Company, and the subsequent inclusion of Rupert's Land in the Dominion of Canada, deprived the officers of any rights which were not open to the world at large. This was the end of privilege, and was followed by systematic immigration on a large scale, and by the imposition of heavy customs duties levied on every article of trade employed from end to end of the country. Competition was systematised, the area of fur trading further restricted, expenses enormously increased and profits consequently diminished.

Yet, on the other hand, the shareholders came to be remunerated to an extent so liberal that in twenty years it had considerably more than extinguished their capital as valued previously to 1863. With the traders the case was otherwise. Practically bound for life to the concern, and largely ignorant of any other business, they had no resource except in the fur trade.

In June, 1871, Sir Stafford Northcote delivered a speech to the shareholders of the Company in London, in which he discussed the whole position and policy of the Company. "He recommended," says his biographer, "a complete and thorough reorganisation of the fur trade on a system involving large expenditure of money. A number of the shareholders preferred to drop the fur trade and trust to the land and sales of land. He, on the contrary, showed that the Company had increased in its imports of furs, that prices were good, and that the unprofitableness of the trade arose from the greater expense of its management and working. These expenses would be diminished, he conceived, by the new methods of transport, by the new railway system of Canada and the United States, and by the Company's own introduction of steamers.

"For all these purposes 'new blood,' new officers, were needed in the Company's services. Now the actual officers were, in a way, sharers in the profits and members of the Com-

pany, not mere employees, and their consent to the change was necessary. The officers like Mr. Donald Smith, a member for Manitoba in the Dominion Parliament, were men of weight and importance. They were especially necessary in dealings with the Indians. It was therefore most undesirable to dismiss them, with the fur trade by way of compensation. They claimed and had a 'moral right' to a share of the famous £300,000 which they did not get. Other claims they had, very strong morally, but not valid in law. To dissatisfy them would not only be unfair and unkind, but, owing to their position in the country, most inexpedient. He calculated, therefore, the value of the 'retiring interests' of the officers, and this sum he advised the Company to pay—namely, £100,000."[1]

At the meeting of the officers at Fort Alexander in 1870, and afterwards, the utmost anxiety was expressed as to their future.

Chief Trader

From ~~Factor~~ J. Lockhart

Abitibi,

September 9, 1870.

I long very much to know if anything regarding our future management was decided on. The Deed Poll is now, of course, a dead letter, and should the guarantee not be renewed, our Dividends will not pay for salt to our porridge. Speaking of the Deed Poll puts me in mind of something I wanted to ask you. You know the terms of the Deed Poll. Now, the Company must of necessity fail, it seems to me, in performing their part of the contract when they sell their chartered rights without our sanction. Don't you think we have a good case for damages against the Company on that account? The Deed Poll having been made out under the powers granted them by the Charter.

Notwithstanding his misgivings then, Mr. Smith found himself and the wintering partners committed to the fur trade, or rather, to a concern based and buttressed by the fur trade, while the Company, i.e. the shareholders,

[1] Andrew Lang, *Earl of Iddesleigh.* It should be pointed out, however, that both the calculation and the advice originated not with Sir Stafford but with Mr. Donald Smith.

were to profit exclusively by the sale of lands which would ultimately prove of enormous value. Unhappily, most of the wintering partners, although they had themselves won and maintained all the vast territory not included in the Company's original charter, held land in little esteem. Moreover, they dared not take risks. Some had suggested half-profits in fur, lands, and general trading, and to relinquish their dependence altogether on the London corporation. But as this would have meant the sacrifice of their retiring pensions, and might mean for a time the sacrifice of any profit whatever, the proposal could not be faced.

One Chief Trader, writing to Mr. Smith, said :

> Our immediate destiny is in your hands. You know our life—you know how arduous our labours are. In nearly every instance they involve long servitude, separation from friends and relations, many hardships which we feel more sensitively as time wears away, and also family separations of a costly character, unless the alternative be accepted of permitting children to fall uneducated into the conditions of semi-barbarism. In some cases to our knowledge, expenses of education have eaten up nearly the whole of the comparatively small emoluments obtained for service. Other hardships are occasional liabilities to starvation and much privation, insufficiency and poor description of food, exposure, increasing anxiety for the trade's success, and the maintenance of those committed to the charge of District and Post Managers. These might be, as they often are, borne cheerfully even for a long period, were the prospects of retirement on an adequate competency in sight ; but failing this hope, they are almost unsupportable. It is true there are exceptions where officers and clerks happen to be stationed where *civilisation* exists ; but these are not very numerous, while every regular servant of the Company is exposed, at least, to the possibility of being removed to the interior.

Also writing to Mr. Smith, another veteran fur trader, Chief Trader Fortescue, thus expressed his mind :

> I am not a sufficiently good lawyer to decide on the legal points of our rights. I always objected to Vice-Chancellor Giffard's decision on the Hudson's Bay House affair ; not on the award, but on the grounds for it. My view is this : All property sent out from England is charged against the fur trade, for which we pay five per cent. interest

afterwards Factor and Chief Factor 1879.

per annum. Part of this is expended in trade. This portion is divided in the proportions assigned by the Deed Poll. Part pays our servants' wages. This is repaid the Company with one year's interest before a division takes place. Part also buys provisions, etc., but does not bear interest, an inventory remaining in the country as undivided profits. Now, our servants are paid and fed by the fur trade; that is, before any profits are divided. The expenditure of the year is deducted from the gross profit, and replaced to the capital, letting the balance go as expenditure. Now, everything made or done by our servants stands in place of this portion of goods or money paid them, which is already expended and charged the outfit finally and unreservedly. Consequently, according to my view, all the work of the servants represents profits undivided. It is not the result of trade, or the returns of part of the goods charged and expended, but it is the result of servants' labour or returns of another portion of the goods, charged and expended—on both of which, for the time being, interest has been paid, and only differs from the furs in being undivided.

Therefore, I hold that the fur trade was and is entitled to two-fifths of the proceeds when the business is finally wound up and the partnership between the stockholders and ourselves dissolved. Meanwhile, this two-fifths belongs to us, not individually, but as a body equivalent to corporate under the Governor and Committee's seal by the Deed Poll, in trust for the trade as long as it shall be carried on. . . . Meanwhile, my idea of reorganisation is, keep down expenses, substitute steam for hand labour wherever you can, and as little cart work as possible. The change in the Bay would be immense. A small vessel could call at Churchill and come right up to the Factory to discharge cargo. We would want no sloops, no schooner, and half the men.

Under the arrangement of 1871 the old Deed Poll was abolished, and a new one took its place. Here is the frank opinion of one of the factors:

I submit that the new Deed Poll is not what we want. We, and the Company in England, have not common interests. I should have been better pleased to have seen it in this way: Twenty-five per cent. of the gross profits given to the fur trade, and wipe out the interest account altogether. We should then always be insured against a blank dividend. But you know the state of the case is this. The Company at home made a bad bargain. They have £700,000 capital lying idle until this land comes in. The shareholders do not yet understand our position as a body. They think we share

the profits of sales of land also—all but those who spoke at the meetings and the Committee. The speakers were little better than sharpers, and it is very strange that no one told them, when complaining of the dividend, that the dividend paid was only on half of each share—viz. that employed in the fur trade, or £1,000,000 out of the £2,000,000, and that the remainder was lying unprofitable and carried no dividend. I hold there is common justice enough among any large body of men in England to have swamped these speculators and made them do us justice. The *prima facie* reading of the agreement was certainly not that of the Deed Poll, though the construction of the latter might certainly have been put upon it. We all were dissatisfied; one or two of us spoke about holding out. Although I was sceptical on the other branches of profit so much talked of, I also thought you were in possession of information not intended for the *profane vulgar*. I accordingly signed, and recommended all my friends to do likewise. Of course, we know the indemnification was an object to all of us. If any of us refused to sign, we lost the indemnification, except by law. The majority were sure to sign, especially the factors; and if the suit were to be contested, how could one or two juniors carry it on alone?

Some amongst the older officers decided that the time had come to retire. Thus, in May, 1872, Chief Trader Roderick MacKenzie wrote to a fellow-factor in the Peace River district:

You will have heard that I left Lac Loche. I could not stomach the stringent rules of the new Deed Poll, and I could not see that the flattering title of a Factor would put me on a better footing than I was before, when under the shade of the old Charter. If we had insisted in participating in the sale of lands there might be some hopes of a certain remuneration for our services, which under the present regime with all the expense is very doubtful. But I must not be discouraging you. Of course, you have a different opinion, and I trust for your own sake, as well as others', that you will not be disappointed.

From ~~Factor~~ Chief Clerk HENRY HARDISTY
CARLTON HOUSE,
January 21, 1872.

How are you satisfied as to the settlement of the Company's affairs at home, as touching the interests of the Wintering Partners? All the officers in this section appear to be very much contented—that is, the commissioned officers. What is to be come of us it is hard to say, but I suppose we have to scratch along as usual.

Under the New Regime

Slowly, but with certainty, it dawned upon the minds of the wintering partners that they should have held out for the land their enterprise, strength, industry, and patience had won. The Company was again to become a power in the land and through the land. In the *Manitoban*, February 25th, 1872, appeared the following:

> Holding as it does one-twentieth of the lands of the Province, it [the Company] must ever wield an immense influence which must be for good, inasmuch as it will be for their interest to foster everything tending to the progress of the country. With men like Mr. Donald A. Smith at the head of that corporation, the result must be to advance the interests of this Province, which is bound to be one of the greatest and most prosperous portions of the Dominion.

For four years Mr. Smith strove to make fur what it had been under the old regime, and then he too gave his thoughts and energies to the land.

To Chief Factor W. L. Hardisty

Your plan of going on periodical trading expeditions to the distant Indians is evidently the one great thing now needed at the Yukon. It is certainly the only way by which trade can be carried on to any extent or profit under present circumstances, with all the adverse influences that have been brought to bear against you. I would therefore advise you to profit by the chance while you have it entirely in your power, taking care always to reserve a sufficient supply of those descriptions of goods which are in greatest demand among the Indians whom you visit.

From Chief ~~Factor~~ Chief D. McArthur *to* a Fellow Officer

Montreal,
March 15, 1872.

You are doubtless familiar with the contents of the new Deed Poll. I do not think it offers sufficient inducement to active young men to remain in the service. I fancy if they give you a really good appointment, such as Chief Factor, you will remain, as I think it would be to your interest to do so. At the same time, it must be acknowledged that seven years is a long time to bind oneself without any guarantee of even a moderate yearly income, and not only so, but under a penalty of a thousand pounds.

D. A. Smith is here just now. He intends going to England on the 15th instant, from whence I suppose we may expect him here about the

middle of May. None of the new appointments are made yet; they will be made as soon as he gets home, and, of course, all from his recommendations. Just now everyone is in a state of expectancy, and there is a silence deep as death over all the service.

I am led to understand that there are a number of capitalists in Montreal who would be quite prepared to start a new fur company on the basis of the old North-West Company, provided they got half a dozen really experienced men to organise and prosecute the work of the interior.

From Chief Factor Campbell

Connie, Connie, Perthshire,
September 14, 1872.

What an inconsistent anomaly is this—and see the result, the ruin of the fur trade! Though the resources are abundant, the country still rich in furs and ores, etc., and no want of its well-trained officers to take them out available for the market, still you are kept waiting in anxious suspense for orders and supplies, like boys looking at the moon, or a traveller waiting on the bank of a river till the stream of water pass by and allow him to pass over dry shod. The ancient Ephesians were worshippers of the great goddess Diana, and so is ——; in practice, at least, of politics and procrastination. But what is surprising is that so many able officers of long experience look on in pensive silence on this vein in which they are suffering, in mind and purse, and not one is found honest and manly enough to represent the real and true state of affairs in the north, though bound in honour to do their utmost to promote the fur trade. Do they do it? No!!! They are waiting, like the impotent man who waited thirty and eight years for the moving of the water of the pool, and lo, "another steppeth down before him"; and so with you in the Hudson Bay. The Company have a capital of £800,000 afloat in business, but from procrastination your sale-and-fur trading shops in Red River and throughout the country are, and have been for the last two years, next to empty to meet the demands of trade.

You will be sorry to hear how shamefully my worthy friend, Mr. ——, has been treated, and he and many others of the best officers, after waiting long in chaotic suspense, had and did leave in utter disgust. Poor Dr. Cowan, a man who would be an honour and an ornament to any profession or company, to have been treated thus, is a disgrace that many waters cannot wash away. The murdering rebels and pillagers of '69 and '70, who cost the Company £100,000 if well and correctly estimated, are all heroes and honourable men.

~~FACTOR~~ JOHN McLEAN ROUNDING UP A HERD OF CARIBOU IN LABRADOR FOR THE HUDSON'S BAY COMPANY

Chief Trader

Proposals for a New Company

A year or two later, a veteran at Stuart's Lake, Chief Factor William Charles, thus unburdened his soul:

As for dividends, I dare say we must be thankful and take what we get. You cannot coerce the Company in London, and they will not abate their power or patronage. The only way they can be forced is by a combination of the Commissioned Officers in the country. Instead of conceding only ten shares, we should have half the net profits. Just fancy their having taken out first about £52,000 and then six-tenths of the remainder! As long as furs sell well, it's all right, even to those seeing the injustice of it all. But let bad times come, and see how the officers will leave! I have been so worried and troubled in spirit the last two years that I care not whether I remain or not in the service, and God knows I have very little to live on, and my children just at that age when they require so much money spent on their education. The Company's service seems to be the only one in which the people do not seem to enjoy life.

On one occasion we have Mr. Smith's view of the wintering partners cutting loose from London altogether and joining a new Canadian fur company.

From Chief Commissioner D. A. Smith
Fort Garry,
February 11, 1873.

I have no doubt that such a prospect [a new fur-trading company] might prove alluring to Sir Hugh Allan and to many other capitalists; but I think you will understand why, after nearly 35 years' connection with the Hudson's Bay Company, I should feel called upon to oppose such a scheme. I quite recognise with you that the old order is past, and that the Company is not the same as it was in our young days, but my old allegiance survives, and I am not yet without hope that we may once again work in unity and with success.

Many, however, took the gloomiest view of the prospects of the wintering partners.

From Chief Trader J. Lockhart *to* a Brother Officer
March, 1872.

I do not think you will make salt for your porridge for three or four years at least. The Chief Commissioner cares nothing and hopes nothing from the fur trade. He expects to make all your fortunes by shop-keeping, but it is all bosh in my view. The same

causes which have removed the fur trade from the Company's hands will operate with regard to any other branch of trade—i.e. a freed trade. We could not compete with free traders in furs and make a profit. Neither can you in goods or otherwise. It is all very well for Donald A. Smith, with his £2,000 secure annually, to puff the new arrangements. But "fine promises butter no parsnips," and you will all find yourselves fooled. We all thought the old Deed Poll a rather one-sided affair, but it wasn't a circumstance to the present one. Only the same share of the profits to be divided among a greater number of officers with no retiring interest to look forward to; only six months' furlough and pay all food expenses for your families. These are only a few of the items. What comparison does it bear with the old one? For your sake and the sakes of a few other true friends of mine still in the service, I hope things may turn out all right, but I do not expect it, and would advise you to do as others have done, i.e. send back their commissions with the note "Declined with thanks." But I think I have said enough on the subject for the present, till we see what good the "new blood" to be infused into the service does.

Sometimes an old colleague made bold to speak his mind plainly to the Chief Commissioner, as, for example, the following:

York Territory, 1872.

I should be very glad to keep you informed from time to time as to the way the new Deed Poll operates now on our interests, as manifested in the charges in the fur trade ledger. Unfortunately, I fear this will be the last year I shall have an opportunity of looking at them, and those that come out this year—if they do come—will only be for Outfit 1871. After this they will be sent direct to Red River, and I am sure of one thing: that there is not a man there who understands them, nor do I believe there are many more than yourself who would think of looking into them to see what we were debited with and upon what we were charged interest.

You have no idea how down-in-the-mouth the arrival of every packet makes me. From all quarters I hear the same news, the same dissatisfaction prevails. But this cannot go on, and business will be ruined unless some steps are taken to insure punctuality and give officers some idea of the policy the Company wish to be pursued. This will be sufficient. We have heads enough in the Northern Department to carry out any line if they will only let us know what it is.

You say that for some years a certain proportion of the outfits

for the inland district would continue to be supplied via York Factory, thus placing me in a bad fix, for if you have sent home the corrected requisition, I should not have enough to supply much more than the Bay posts, and if not, why, of course I would have stock for the whole department as usual. What amount of goods is York Factory to supply?

Again, I have been ordered to reduce the establishment here. Now, if the same work is to be done I must keep the same staff of men. I lose thirteen this year, which is serious, as I have to pack the same outfits as formerly. Casks and cases must be made, boats must be built as usual, and I must have wood for the purpose and keep a gang of twelve men sawing all winter; and how am I to do this if I have orders not to re-engage my men as my contracts fall in, and they send me out none to replace them?

To make things better, Mr. —— writes me to let him know "what districts I can supply for Outfit 1873 and Outfit 1874," when I know no more of the matter until the ship from England comes in than he does. Don't you think it would be better to give me general instructions of what districts are to be outfitted here each year, and leave me responsible for doing it?

Cut off Red River, isolate it as much as possible from all knowledge of the intimate affairs of the country if we want to keep the fur trade. Now, Mr. Mactavish desires to enhance the importance of Red River by making it the depot of the Company's account. Nobody but Mr. ——— and myself in this department know what is the amount of the York work, and it amuses me to hear outsiders say, "In a few years York will be only a small trading post." It will be always the head of a district that usually turns out the second largest returns in the Northern Department, Red River being first, and, from being in direct communication with London, will always be equivalent to the head of a small department. In fact, it will be similar to Moose Factory exactly.

We are very poorly officered as it is, but if opposition finds its way unchecked down in this quarter they will find they will lose more than they do in Saskatchewan or Cumberland. I submit that Red River has more than enough to do to keep its own affairs going properly. In 1871 it only collected about £3,000 worth of furs. Canadian buyers bought up all the rest. We all knew that Red River would lose the fur trade, and that it would likely become the central market for Canada from all the surrounding districts; but we were told that to replace the fur trade the Red River sale-shops would be developed, and probably show a greater profit, as the fur trade was always more or less of a loss at Red River. But

what do I find? Why, that the nominal profit and the amount of returns in Red River are nearly the same. Consequently, there has not been sufficient profit on the saleshops to more than cover the expenses of the district in 1871.

The Chief Commissioner, for his part, did not spare himself in his endeavour, not only for the welfare of the London shareholders, but also for the wintering partners, whose chances of a share in the lands were now fast vanishing away. With them generally it was fur trade or nothing, the fur trade that had led them and their fore-runners into the wilderness for two centuries. For their sakes, then, the fur trade must be made to pay. It was a Herculean task Donald Smith had set himself. To succeed permanently was, as we see now, impossible, for, in truth, in the affairs of this world no man can serve two masters. Yet that he did succeed for a time is a tribute to the Chief Commissioner's sheer talent for management.[1]

As early as 1873 Professor G. M. Grant, who accompanied Mr. Sanford Fleming through the West, wrote:

Nothing shows more conclusively the wonderful progress of Manitoba, and the settled condition into which it has emerged from the chaos of the last two or three years ago, than the fact that the Hudson's Bay Company sold at auction, the other day, in building lots, thirteen acres of the five hundred of their reserve around Fort Garry, at the rate of 7,000 dollars an acre. At half the rate for the rest, the Hudson's Bay Company will receive for this small reserve more than the money payment of £300,000 sterling, which Canada gave for the whole territory; and, if a few acres favourably situated bring so much, what must be the value of the many million of acres transferred to the Dominion? The policy of the Company now is exactly the opposite of what it used to be; formerly all their efforts were directed to keep the country a close preserve; now they are doing all in their power to open it up. The times have changed, and they have changed with them. And, regarding them merely as a Company whose sole object has been, and is, to look after their own interest and pay good dividends to the shareholders, their present policy is as sagacious for to-day as the former was for yesterday. While a fur-trading company with sovereign rights, they did not

[1] See Appendix C.

look beyond their own proper work; they attended to that, and, as a duty merely incidental to it, governed half a continent in a paternal or semi-patriarchal way, admirably suited to the tribes that roamed over its vast expanses. But, as they can no longer be supreme, it is their interest that the country should be opened up, and they are taking their place among new competitors and preparing to reap a large share of the fruits of the development. For many a year to come they must be a great power in our North-West.

In taking hold of Sir George Simpson's sceptre, Mr. Smith set about a thorough reorganisation of the fur trade. His attention was early drawn to the danger of American competition in the Yukon district and the borders of Alaska. Chief Trader MacFarlane wrote from the far northern territory:

> We are not only in danger of having the usual quiet placidity of a northern life rudely broken in upon, but our trade is now so very seriously threatened by the encroachments of an active and enterprising opposition that, in my opinion, it is only by the immediate adoption of prompt and vigorous measures that we can hope to maintain our ascendancy in the district, which has hitherto been considered the mainstay of the Company.
>
> The introduction and use of spirituous liquors as an article of traffic by the Americans necessarily added to their difficulties, besides proving detrimental to the Indians, and would, of course, materially affect their future hunts.
>
> There can be no doubt that the American traders on the Yukon will, as soon as possible, try and push on in the direction of Selkirk and La Pierre's House next summer; however, I can hardly believe that they will ascend higher than Fort Yukon, but as Jonathan is a very different animal from his slow-going predecessors, the Russians, we must not be surprised, but, on the contrary, well prepared to receive him should he even attempt to reach the Mackenzie via the mountains. It will be observed that three companies make use of boats similar to, but larger than, ours for the navigation of the different rivers, but as it is probable that they will eventually find it to their interest to amalgamate and thus become one powerful corporation, I have no doubt that steam will shortly supersede—at least, to a considerable extent—the use of boats in that quarter.

A certain free-trader, Mr. Laberge, threatened to take possession of Fort Yukon because it was within the

boundary. Both Chief Factor McDougall and his colleagues looked upon this as a piece of idle bravado, "characteristic of the person who was so soft as to give it expression in writing."

Our right to continue trading on the Yukon can hardly be challenged even by the United States Government itself, let alone a company of private traders who have nothing whatever to do with the political side of the question. We have the right of discovery and possession in our favour. The true position of Fort Yukon has never been astronomically fixed, and even should it be found that we are within the boundary, so ignorantly settled upon by the Colonial Minister of 1825, who wantonly made over to a foreign power a large and important tract of country, discovered and explored by British subjects, the utmost, I fancy, the American Executive can do is to call upon us to pay customs duty on our imports for trade within their territory.

It seems to me that our position on the Yukon is somewhat similar to that we hold or recently held in Oregon, viz. that we have the same possessory rights, acquired in the same manner in the one as we had in the other country. It would, however, be advisable to enter into an arrangement with the United States Government in reference to this and other relative matters. If they mean to exact duties on our imports, could it not be made imperative on American citizens to pay similar duties on all goods imported by them into British territory, or, better still, make the fur trade free on both sides? The sale of spirituous liquors to the nations should, however, be strictly prohibited to both parties. But I need not have said so much on this subject, as you will doubtless know infinitely better than I do what course to follow in the circumstances.

There was a grave risk that the extensive and valuable territory on the west side of the mountains lying between Walrussia and British Columbia would become virtually an American possession. It was therefore urged upon the Chief Commissioner as absolutely necessary for the protection of the Company's trade on the Mackenzie from incursions from the westward that immediate vigorous measures should be taken. For the trade and occupation of the country to the southward of Fort Selkirk one or two posts should be established.

The Company's Difficulties

By referring to the map it will be seen that Dease's House and Frances Lake appear to be not only comparatively easy of approach from our western coast, but also the points which should be selected for the objects we would have in view, especially as I take it for granted that those posts would, with the nearest fort in New Caledonia, so effectually occupy the country as to preclude petty or other traders from attempting to reach the Mackenzie via the Fort Halkett route —the most impracticable and dangerous of all.

As the Americans have now established themselves at the Rendezvous, we cannot possibly avoid building at the mouth of the Queheele River, the most central situation for a fort. Trading expeditions by boats would not answer now as they would probably arrive too late at the Rendezvous. When Mr. M—— goes down in April, he will remain with the Indians, trade their furs, and pay for the same when the boat to be dispatched from the fort after the disruption of the ice arrives there. Whilst I believe this to be the very best plan we can adopt at present, I confess there is some risk and danger attending it; but as I have great confidence in Mr. M——'s good sense and judgment, I think he will carry out his intentions in a satisfactory and successful manner, without coming into any unpleasant or awkward collision with his opponents. I have advised him to act towards them in a firm, liberal, and conciliatory spirit, and to avoid all unnecessary discussion. I have also recommended him to try to come to some understanding with those in authority amongst them, which would be binding on both parties until our position there be properly defined by an arrangement to be hereafter entered into between the H. B. Co.'s and the United States Government.

It was obvious that the Company, which laboured under the great disadvantage of being obliged to import supplies at very great trouble, delay, and expense across an entire continent, could not possibly be expected to compete successfully with an opposition which, with supplies comparatively close at hand, were able by the aid of steam alone to resort to the most eligible points for trade.

This being the case, it is as easy for us to make use of the same route and means, and I would therefore strongly urge that a district be formed on the west side of the mountains, which should be attached to the Western Department, the posts to consist of Fort Yukon (headquarters), Selkirk, the proposed new post at the Queheele River, La Pierre's House, and Peel's River.

For the outfitting of the new district a small steamer, I believe, could annually make the voyage from Victoria to Yukon and back; she might even proceed as high as Selkirk to render the outfit and receive the returns of that post, while the supplies required for the trade of La Pierre's House and Peel's River might be conveyed by boat to the former place. The people of the latter post would only have their own outfits and returns to cross in the winter—not half the work they now have in performing the Yukon transport business.

Another enterprising trader reported:

It would be extremely injudicious to excite the cupidity of the Yankees by making them thus cognizant of the valuable returns annually exported from the Mackenzie River District.

The Arctic Sea also abounds with whales, seals, and walruses. Is it not highly probable that the Americans will shortly attempt to turn these valuable resources to some account? And if one or more of the fur-trading companies succeed in establishing themselves to the eastward of Point Barrow, what is to prevent them from penetrating to Mackenzie River and even beyond?

It seemed as if the time had arrived for the Company to give up the old ways with their peculiar trouble and annoyances, and at once send a steamer to ascertain the practicability of the proposed new way by Behring Strait, and thereby not only anticipate the Americans, but also benefit the Company's trade in the entire country north of Portage La Loche.

Commissioner Smith reported:

"I agree that if this enterprise is entrusted to a man of patience, courage, and energy, I have no doubt of its success.

From ~~Factor~~ Trader Alex. Matheson

Rapid River,

March 4, 1873.

The Indians are getting awkward and unmanageable, sometimes going in to Red River with their furs and bringing free-traders back with them. In the north you cannot realise what real opposition is. There is none here, and when I am home I hardly know what to do with myself for want of occupation, but at the Pas and other places I have been at, the pains of purgatory are nothing to the constant worry one is everlastingly in when these interlopers abound.

Indian Tribes at War

From ~~Factor~~ Chief clerk HENRY HARDISTY

December 22, 1873.

Our carts from the plains have just arrived, having had to go about three or four hundred miles for their meat. The difficulty of getting provisions here is getting greater year after year. The meat at present brought in will cost the Company at least 1s. per pound, apart from the tear and wear of oxen and horses. The carts sent out this season of the year are also generally useless when returned.

By the hunters who arrived to-day I hear that the Crees have had a good whipping from the Blackfeet lately. It appears a large party of Crees went in search of the Blackfeet to steal horses, and seeing at a distance a few lodges, concluded to make a descent upon them, but on getting closer discovered that it was a very large camp of Blackfeet. The Blackfeet rushed out and chased the Crees into the south branch of the Saskatchewan along the banks of which they were camped, and killed fifty-two of them. There were supposed to have been between two and three hundred Crees at this engagement. I should think that between enemies and smallpox the different tribes of Indians who infest the plains must be getting gradually less. There is one tribe of Indians on the other plains called the Circees (friendly with the Blackfeet), who are only left with one tent, the smallpox having made quite a hole in that tribe. The tribe was supposed to have numbered sixty lodges last spring.

Mr. Clarke[x] has just started for Red River. He arrived here on the 19th instant from Edmonton, and is now on his way home. Captain Butler did not return with him, but is going to Helena, Montana, and from there will strike for the Pacific Railway.

From CHIEF FACTOR R. HAMILTON *to* ~~CHIEF TRADER~~ Inspecting Factor MACFARLANE

NORWAY HOUSE, 1873.

You will have heard with regret of the death of Mr. Anderson, late Chief Factor in charge of the Southern Department, and lastly Mr. Christie. Is it not a sad roll of our old officers? James Anderson was one of the most intimate friends I had in the world, and his death was a great shock to me. You will have heard of the disaster to the *Walrus* on her homeward trip last fall. The Board say that all loss both to cargo and vessel will be fully covered by insurance.

The whole Province has lately been in a great state of excitement, as the local elections have just come off, and in most of the parishes there was great competition. The Hudson's Bay Company took no part in the elections this time, and I think that in consequence of their not having thrown their influence in with either party that they have made enemies of both sides. It is said that Mactavish

x later Chief Factor Lawrence

gave his private support to the Davis-Schultz faction, and, of course, all suppose he was representing the Hudson's Bay Company, for Mr. Grahame is utterly unknown in the Province, and has no weight whatever in Manitoba. I am pleased to tell you that Schultz has at length got himself into a tight place, having been committed by the judge to stand his trial at the next assizes for perjury. Some say that he cannot possibly get out of the scrape, and that there is a strong probability of his being down in the penitentiary here, with a ball to his leg.

From Chief Commissioner D. A. Smith

The circumstance of our trade and occupation of the country, no less than our own individual interests, render it necessary that we should crush out opposition—I might say *lawless* opposition, for it is governed by none of the laws and rules which have always regulated our own conduct—by every legitimate means. These free-traders of whom you complain are actuated only by a desire to make an immediate profit, at whatever cost to the Indians or the morals of the community or to the future of the fur-bearing animals, and then depart to leave us to bear the consequences of their cupidity and ruthlessness.

From ~~Chief Trader~~ Factor Roderick MacFarlane

Portage la Loche,

July 15, 1873.

I have in previous communications pointed out to you that boat work was played out, and I again beg to reiterate the statement, with further request that no time be lost in putting steam on the Athabasca and Mackenzie Rivers. A relative subject of grave importance is that of servants. Although I have this season secured nearly all those serving this district, for periods varying from one to two years, without making any material increase in their wages, I must not conceal from you that, bad as the present lot are in some respects, we cannot well even by offering increased pay have them replaced by better or as good hands from Red River, and that it will therefore be advisable to grant good terms to those we now have in Athabasca, and also introduce steam as quickly as possible, and thus enable us to dispense with a number of servants at present absolutely required for our district transportation business.

Before concluding I must be permitted to point out my high sense of the importance of the services rendered by the officers attached to this district, and from their merit and long service I would particularly beg to recommend for speedy promotion Messrs. MacAulay,

MacKenzie, and Moberly. Apart from the justice of the thing, I believe that such a course would have a most beneficial effect on the future of Athabasca.

From Factor W. McMurray

Isle à la Crosse,

December 2, 1874.

You will be glad to learn that Mr. Clarke, before he left for Canada, managed to secure a good quantity of seasoned provisions at Carlton. This will enable us here to carry on the transport of pieces with greater facility. Another welcome piece of news to you will be that the *Northcote*, the new Saskatchewan steamer, made the trial trip to Carlton in safety.

Mr. MacFarlane has his own troubles in Athabasca from the presence of free-traders in the Upper Peace River, but we have our petty annoyances also. Apart from Paul Lalonde, who . . . has established himself at Green Lake, there are others between that place and Carlton.

I have not heard from W. J. Christie of late, but I learnt from Clarke that he (Christie) had accompanied the Government officials to Qu'Appelle, where, it was rumoured, a treaty was to have been made with some of the plain tribes. Of Major Butler I have not heard anything since July.

In 1874 a steamer built on the Saskatchewan proceeded up the river some six hundred miles to Carlton, and from that point to Rocky Mountain House. The draft of this steamer was only two and a half or three feet. It was about 150 feet in length and 30 feet of beam, and capable of carrying a very considerable cargo. Mr. Smith found that the navigation might safely be commenced in June and continued until some time in September. He himself descended the river some 500 miles in July and August, and found then plenty of water for a boat drawing four or five feet.

"Though," he said afterwards, "I have great respect for scientific men, I am bound to say that if the Hudson's Bay Company had been guided by the reports of engineers, they never would have dared to launch a steamer on the Saskatchewan. Other persons reported that the river was navigable, and took the responsibility of building a

steamer at a cost of fifty or sixty thousand dollars." It is true one steamer was wrecked, but it was not directly owing to the difficulties of navigation. The vessel, " through some misunderstanding between the captain and the officer, fell on the rocks in the rapids, and the wood being soft and the cargo heavy, was lost. Undeterred by this, another vessel was built."[1]

This year ~~Chief~~ Factor MacFarlane established Fort Smith, and named it as well as the " Smith Landing," the southern end of the intervening wagon road, in honour of the Chief Commissioner.

Chief Factor Hamilton *to* ~~Chief~~ Factor MacFarlane

Montreal,

January 2, 1874.

I wrote you last from the Saskatchewan giving you an account of the miserable disaster that occurred there last August, I mean the wreck of our new steamer. After getting all the cargo dried, as much as we could, I made my way back to Fort Garry, where I met our Commissioner, and in company with him started for Carlton on the 23rd September. From Carlton, Mr. Smith turned back to Fort Garry, making the distance in five days, while I was ordered to proceed on to the upper posts of the Saskatchewan on a little pleasure trip. I would have enjoyed the trip very much indeed had the season not been so far advanced, but as it was I had some cold drives before I got back to Fort Garry on the 27th November.

You will hear from Mr. Smith by this opportunity regarding his intention of meeting his officers next spring in council at Carlton. I have strongly urged upon him the advisability, I may say the necessity, of his doing so, and I am glad to say he has consented to summon all you gentlemen who are within hail. I have suggested that yourself, McMurray, Rich, Hardisty, McKay, and Clark could meet him at Carlton, and I feel assured that in course of a day or so more business can be got through than could be effected by a six months' correspondence. I trust you all think so too. There is a rumour that Mr. Smith is going to resign a certain portion of his duties, so that it is barely possible you may have a stranger with you. If so, I trust he will prove a man with whom we will all be able to pull amicably. Mr. Smith may have his little faults, but all who know him feel that he is the true, upright gentleman, whose integrity

[1] *Parliamentary Debates*, 1876.

is beyond all question; for my own part, I shall regret exceedingly when Mr. Smith severs his connection with the fur trade, for so long as he remained at our head I knew we had a man who would see that we had justice done us, at least as far as lay in his power. There has been a cry that Mr. Smith has been superseded, but this is false. Mr. Smith has not been superseded, but has asked to be relieved of a portion of his duties, which are more than any one man is able to attend to. I do not myself know exactly what portion of his present duties he will resign, but rather think it will be his immediate connection with the fur trade. However, I am not by any means assured that it will be so, and I presume it will be some little time before it is made public.

An answer to all the fears and carping criticism to which he had been subjected, even by his oldest friends, was at length forthcoming. Mr. Smith wrote:

MONTREAL,
January 2, 1874.

For your own information and that of other Commissioned Officers within your district, I beg to enclose herewith this statement of result of trade in the Northern, Southern, Western, and Montreal Departments for Outfit 1872. Showing in the first an apparent gain of forty-eight thousand, five hundred and forty-four pounds, two shillings, and eightpence (£48,544 2s. 8d.) against thirteen thousand, nine hundred and forty pounds, fourteen shillings, and fourpence (£13,940 14s. 4d.) in 1871. In the second sixteen thousand and fifty-five pounds, fivepence (£16,055 0s. 5d.) against twelve thousand six hundred and eighty-one pounds, five shillings and ninepence (£12,681 5s. 9d.) in 1871. In the third sixty-six thousand two hundred and eighty-four dollars and eighty cents ($66,284.80); and in the last an apparent loss of eight thousand and ninety dollars and twenty-two cents ($8,090.22) as against an apparent gain of thirteen thousand and sixty-one dollars and six cents ($13,061.06) in 1871.

While the three former as thus exhibited show very handsome profits, it is to be regretted the Montreal Department is so much less favourable than it was last year, but as the bulk of the returns consist of furs, many of them worth considerably more than the prices at which they are placed on the statement, it is believed that the actual result of the business of this department, instead of a loss, will be a profit to some extent. The detention of the *Lady Head* in the country with the returns of the Southern Department, will to some extent detract from the gains of Outfit 1872 as a whole, but notwithstanding this,

it may be expected that the dividends for that outfit will be more than an average, and such as will give satisfaction to those interested in it.

It is with much pleasure I have also to inform you that the reports of the trade from the district in the several departments are, so far as have yet been heard from, favourable, giving promise of a good result for the business of the current outfit.

Those factors and traders who had doubted the Chief Commissioner's ability to make the fur trade pay, then hastened to congratulate him and themselves.

Chief ~~Factor~~ Roderick MacKenzie, who had retired in disgust in 1871, wrote :

After receiving such large dividends you will not consider yourselves serfs in future. I am afraid you have already in a measure immortalised him ! He is worthy of credit for his great penetration, and I now reproach myself for discrediting his statements and throwing away my heritage against the wish of my friends.

At the same time, however, Mr. Smith realized the hopelessness of the situation.

No matter what efforts I should put forth, I should still fail to make large continuous and immediate profits for the commissioned officers out of the fur trade alone. When the country is peopled we could do it by shop-keeping on a large scale ; but many intervening lean years would cause a revolt.

Thus, though reluctantly, he gave up the struggle to make profit for the Company through fur, and accepted the office of Land Commissioner. Chief Factor James A. Grahame was appointed his successor.

Writing on May 30th, 1874, to inform his old friends of his intentions, Mr. Smith said :

It becomes my duty to inform you that with the close of the current outfit, 1873, my connection with the Hudson's Bay Company, in the capacity of Superintendent of the Fur Trade and commercial business, ceases.

In thus closing my official connection with the officers of the Company with whom it has been my privilege to have been associated for six-and-thirty years, I beg to thank you for the cordial

and undeviating support and assistance I have received at your hands while superintending the trade, and to assure you that I shall retain a lively sense of the same, and always feel pleasure in the success of yourself and every other officer connected with the service.

While taking leave of you in the capacity in which we have heretofore stood towards each other officially, I may mention that, at the request of the Governor and Committee, I shall continue to represent the Company in respect of their important landed interests and such other matters as do not immediately pertain to the trade and commercial business.

It may not be out of place for me here to add that I shall, as formerly, give my attention to the personal interests of my friends connected with the service, who have investments with private cash in my hands, this latter, as you are aware, having throughout been entirely independent of my relation to the Company as their Commissioner.

CHAPTER XVI

THE WINTERING PARTNERS (1874-89)

REFLECTING upon the achievements of what might almost be called the apostolic succession of the fur trade, one is inclined to agree with the dictum that throughout the British Empire Providence raises men of a special breed to carry on great and special work. In the North-West and Hudson's Bay Company's services, like that of the East Indian Company (on a larger scale), for some two centuries men were needed able to acquire the habit of command and to develop responsibility. Their characters were formed amidst constant familiarity with danger, and they had to face, as one writer has said, "the occasional, and sometimes frequent, necessity, perhaps under even desperate circumstances, of rapid exercise of tact and sound judgment in coming to a safe conclusion when life and property were often staked on an immediate decision."

Although, as we have seen, Mr. Smith resigned his Chief Commissionership of the Company's fur trade in 1874 to become Land Commissioner, he never ceased to take a deep personal interest in the service in which he had then spent thirty-six years of his life. The Company had changed, its political principles of trade had altered almost beyond recognition, but the little loyal, far-flung legion of fur-traders, of the lineage of the old, remained. Between them unity was well-nigh impossible, and it became more and more the policy of the London Board and their instrument—usually, as I have before remarked, a man who knew nothing about the fur trade—to keep them sundered.

Reasons of sentiment, rather than of commercial profit,

kept Donald A. Smith amongst them, or rather at their head. More and more, no matter who happened to be in power, they looked to him for leadership. His commercial and industrial interests grew; had he consulted these alone he would, as he said himself, have "bade farewell to the fur trade." But he would as soon have severed his right arm as cut himself off from the old Company of Adventurers of the North. Six months after his resignation, in January, 1875, he wrote to ~~Chief~~ Factor Archibald Macdonald:

> Without strict economy in every part of the business, and retrenchment in outfits, officers, men, and posts, in every item to the lowest possible degree, dividends cannot be expected. Indents[1] beyond what the resources of the district can produce must be checked.
>
> It is the wisest and most prudent policy to reduce the outfits to the real requirements of the trade and cut off all unnecessary luxuries and useless trash that are of no beneficial use for men or Indians, but increasing the discontent and diversion to buy and impoverish themselves for what they do not really require, and which conduce in no wise to increase their comfort, content, or happiness; every additional unnecessary item added to the outfit increases the amount of cost price. The difficulty of freighting in such large, bulky outfits, as well as the very heavy cost of freight, must always be borne in mind.

Amongst the letters of the officers to one another there are many tributes to Mr. Smith. One to Chief Factor MacFarlane from a veteran who had known him for over thirty years, Inspecting Chief Factor Hamilton, I cannot forbear quoting:

> Carlton House,
> *August* 11, 1875.
>
> On reaching Carlton from the Grand Rapids, I was not a little disappointed to find that Council had been held, and the new Chief Commissioner off to Red River. I presume, however, that he had reasons of his own for being so precipitate, and, under existing circumstances, I don't think he cared much to meet with his Inspecting Factor, who might perhaps have told him some truths that he would not care to have recorded on his tombstone when he goes hence.
>
> When under the command of Mr. Smith I knew precisely what

[1] Orders for merchandise.

duties I had to perform, and my authority was well and clearly defined, so that every gentleman in that section of territory committed to my supervision was aware that with me and through me only could any business be transacted.

I had heard so much of Mr. G—— during his reign at Norway House, that I was fearful I would not be able to serve under him either with comfort to myself or benefit to the Company, but determined to make a fair trial and see how matters would get on. The trial has now been made, and has proved so unsatisfactory that I have made up my mind to leave the old service in which I have spent upwards of thirty years of my life, and have requested permission to retire next first of June.

For the large dividends we have already received since reorganisation we have to thank a man of a very different stamp from Mr. G—— I knew at the time that we sustained a great loss when Mr. Smith resigned his position as Chief Commissioner of the old Company we have all served in from boyhood, but I did not think that we should feel the effect so soon. Mr. Smith was a gentleman in every sense of the word, respected by his friends and feared by his opponents, for he has wonderful talents.

I am one of those who believe that a man can be thoroughly strict in all business matters and still hold the respect and esteem of those with whom he is thrown in contact.

To Mr. Smith himself the officers were wont to express their opinions with great freedom. The following letter from Chief Factor W. McMurray may be regarded as a specimen :

Isle à la Crosse,
May 5, 1875.

You, like myself, have doubtless heard the opinion expressed that the Canadian Government, as far at least as the North-West Territories are concerned, is a failure. What benefit, protection, or aid do we poor devils in these parts derive from being subjects of the Dominion? If this country had belonged to the Stars and Stripes since 1870, we would not find ourselves to-day in the position we are. As it is, our isolation is only a mild form of banishment.

With regard to the last year's promotions, it does certainly look as if those who have " to bear the heat and burden of the day " are overlooked, and only those at head-quarters and prominent places brought on. In saying this I do not for a moment wish to apply the remark to myself. I have got my Chief Factorship, and never

expected or aspired to a higher grade in the service. It was not likely that their Honours would give an Inspecting Chief Factorship to one who from the first never failed, when he had a chance of doing so, of advocating the rights of the officers in the country and of stating his opinions, crude as they may have been, in a plain straightforward manner.

We get from these letters an occasional glimpse of what the difficulties of transport were in the " 'seventies," before the advent of the railways.

Writing from Carlton in 1875, Chief Trader W. Clark said :

The Chief Commissioner, his son, Mr. Archibald McDonald, and Mr. R. Campbell arrived here on Friday the ninth day from Fort Garry. The roads beyond Fort Ellice were fearfully bad, one continued swamp ; and flies were in millions by the way. Their second and third day, they passed bands of freighters who had been already a month on the way with their loaded teams, and will be a month more before they will reach this far.

Steam navigation of the rivers, introduced during Mr. Smith's regime, also offered many difficulties, as the following, from Chief ~~Factor~~ Trader Alex. Matheson, will show :

Pas, Cumberland District,
January 11, 1875.

I have sent you officially the whole history of the new river steamer. She came back from Carlton all safe, though experiencing much more difficulty coming down stream than in going up. It is a delicate task to steer a huge leviathan like the *Northcote* in stony, crooked rapids, and it is the opinion of those pretending to have any knowledge of the subject that there can't be certainty of final success until some boulders or other obstacles in the Nepowin and Coal Falls Rapids are removed. The steamer is now in winter quarters at Grand Rapids with the captain watching her, and putting up buildings for warehouse purposes at each end of the portage.

Or, again, the following from the Chief Factor at Edmonton, written under date December 24th, 1875 :

The trouble and expense we have incurred of late years in introducing steam on the Saskatchewan. I wrote you in September, 1874, of the successful trip made by the *Northcote*. I exulted in the

idea that all our trouble was at an end, and that we were on the eve of seeing our business placed on a sure basis. But what benefit have we derived from all our work and great expenditure?

It makes me fairly mad when I think that, through the blundering stupidity of one man, the work of several years should have been rendered fruitless. Mr. G—— has managed—or rather, I should say, has grossly mismanaged—our business during the past season, and the *Northcote* on her return from Edmonton to the Grand Rapids had to lie at that place from August 5th to September 4th, waiting cargo from Red River. The consequence was that the *Northcote* could only make one trip to Carlton, and is now passing the winter in the vicinity of that post. When a thorough mess of our steamboat business had been made, Mr. G—— gave orders for sending the western outfits across land by way of Carlton, and four hundred carts had to be at once engaged for that purpose, which cost the Company a pretty sum. This, however, is but one item of the expense and loss which the trade must sustain. For instance, the residue of the outfit for the post of Edmonton will cost a big amount for freight up from Carlton at this season, as men cannot be induced to travel under double the usual freight price.

Mr. Hardisty had an examination made last summer of the country lying between here and the elbow of the Athabasca River, when, I am happy to say, an excellent route for a cart road was discovered.

When I left Slave Lake, Mr. Young was on the point of starting for the Peace River for the purpose of searching for a cart route through that section.

A new grade, that of "Inspecting Chief Factor," had recently been introduced. This innovation is alluded to in the letter from Chief Factor W. McMurray, quoted above. In the following letter the same writer makes further reference to the subject:

Isle à la Crosse,
April 3, 1876.

You will be surprised to learn that I have not yet signed the covenant, and am therefore not virtually an Inspecting Chief Factor. I wrote the Chief Commissioner, both officially and under private cover, thanking him and the Honourable Board for their proof of their confidence in me, but at the same time informed the Chief Commissioner that I would sign the covenant only after I had met him at Carlton, and received from him the proper explanations regarding . . . the position of Inspecting Chief Factor.

Grasping Shareholders

You who know me are aware that I am not an arrogant or dictatorial person, nor one likely to make an abuse of any little power that may be given me; on the other hand, you will, I think, admit that I have enough of self-esteem and manly pride (not vanity) not to allow myself to be placed in a false position. The position of Inspecting Chief Factor may by some be considered a *great honour*, but for me it never had, and never will have, any attraction, unless the grade gives me some discretionary powers and thereby enable one to do some good.

And so the long tale of woe and discontent goes on. There is a touch of pathos in the following from Chief Factor Robert Hamilton:

CARLTON,
May 29, 1876.

A very few days more and my connection with the concern in which the greatest part of my life has been spent will have ceased, but, believe me, that whatever my lot may be in future, I shall always feel a deep interest in the Company in which I have spent so many happy days, and in which I leave behind so many esteemed and valued friends. Between you and me, there has been no cloud during a friendship of over thirty years.

It is pleasant to add that this officer was persuaded to remain for a few seasons longer in the service. None the less, the wintering partners came slowly but surely to realise that they had been for a second time used as a cats-paw for what the writer of the next letter calls a "crowd of grasping, howling shareholders." But what could they do? One of the ablest of the Chief Factors, Roderick MacFarlane, had come boldly forward with a plan for an equal division of profits with the London capitalists. Alas! it was too late. Besides, still reasoned many of the veterans, what *was* the good of lands, even in such a centre as Winnipeg? The opinion of such a veteran as Chief Factor Christie is worth giving:

FORT GARRY,
January 13, 1877.

The wintering partners have actually had no power since 1872. These lands are wonderful things on paper, I dare say; but I

Inspecting Chief Factor and Indian Treaty Commissioner

know that the most valuable part of the Fort Garry reserve has been a loss so far, eating itself up with taxes. There is a dead set against the Hudson's Bay Company, and they will eventually be taxed out of the country. What do you think of the assessment of Fort Garry trade goods only being placed at $350,000? They place our inventories at what value they choose, and we have no appeal. The Hudson's Bay Company cannot gain a case in the courts here because the Chief Justice is against them; the result is, we support the corporation with our taxes. We are the only moneyed institution to-day, and consequently the only ones who pay. I look now for no future in this service. It is too over-burdened with capital, and profits seem to be on the decrease from opposition and other causes. An increase of the capital of the Company is under consideration. This looks rather bad, for the same profits will have only to be divided between a greater number, and consequently less per cent. for each. Of course, this only affects the shareholders, but must eventually make itself felt on the whole business. Expenditures are increasing enormously, and these steamers are enough to sink any concern. Added to this the smallpox now raging around Lake Winnipeg, among the Indians and Icelanders, will prevent whatever furs are collected in that quarter from being shipped next season. Then the Labrador ship with full cargo has been wrecked and all hands lost save one sailor. These adversities are all telling on the profits. I probably take a rather gloomy view of it all, still there is no doubt that the old machine is getting a little unhinged. Of course, a company trading for two hundred years and making profits and paying its shareholders regularly a good interest cannot be thrown out of gear for some time, but gradually symptoms of decay show themselves which eventually disorganise the whole body.

There certainly was a crisis in the fur trade, and some of the leading officers again threatened to band themselves together to fight the London Company.

Writing from Fort Garry on September 21st, 1877, Mr. Smith offered the following advice:

Try and reduce your expenses, follow up an economical system of trade, and do not buy furs in Athabasca at a higher price than they are realising in England, or any market in Europe. The price of furs is still falling at home, but I have hopes that they will rise soon.

I expect to be in London to the November meeting of the shareholders, and will do all I can for my friends in the North. I intend to have a talk and explain matters to the directors.

Helping Old Colleagues

Mr. Smith himself was anything but satisfied with the state of affairs. He was not able, however, to achieve much for his late colleagues. On January 2nd, 1878, he wrote to Chief Factor Rankin:

I go to England next week, and while there will likely see the members of the Board who, I have no doubt, having the interests of the shareholders and officers at heart, will consent to make such arrangements as will place the business on a more satisfactory footing in respect of emoluments than it has been since outfit 1874.

Some days later he received the following from Chief ~~Factor~~ Trader Alex Matheson:

GRAND RAPIDS,
January 10, 1878.

The letter advising us of the Board's makeshift scheme for tiding over the crisis temporarily is respectfully acknowledged, and referred for our answer to our attorneys. Now is the opportunity we have been waiting for so long, and it is to be hoped we shall all prove faithful to ourselves. The alarm of the Board indicated by the proposals set forth in the Chief Commissioner's letter of the 18th December shows that we have only to keep together to insure entire success, and I hope all in the North are animated by the same spirit which moves us.

To Mr. Smith, in fact, the wintering partners again turned to negotiate more satisfactory terms with the London shareholders "calling themselves the Hudson's Bay Company." And to a better man they could not have turned.

To an old friend, Chief Factor MacFarlane, who had done him a favour, which many another would have accepted with but little notice, he once wrote:

MONTREAL,
December 26, 1878.

Greatly as I am obliged to you for your kind attention, I feel that you have done so much for me in this way on former occasions, and I am already so deeply indebted to you that I really do not know how I can ever possibly repay you, but believe, at any rate, that I am very sensible of all your kindness, and trust an opportunity may occur by which I may be enabled to give more expression to it than it is now in my power to do.

You will hear with much regret of the failure of City of Glasgow Bank, bringing down with it the Caledonian Bank, and involving in misery and ruin many of the shareholders of both banks. A more sad affair than any that has happened in Scotland for many a long day. And in England they have also had a bad failure in the West of England and South Wales Bank, so you see they are at home suffering more—far more, indeed—than we do, although with us it is bad enough, as the dividends on all Bank stocks have recently been greatly diminished and the value of the shares have latterly run down tremendously in some cases, but it is a consolation to us that as regards Banks of Montreal and Toronto, the capital at least is safe.

There is not one man in ten—aye, or in fifty—here or in Canada generally who is not very much poorer now than eighteen months back, from the shrinkage in stocks and in investments generally; but this is not confined to Canada, nor to this continent, but is common to Europe and, I may say, every civilised country. Hudson's Bay business, of course, suffers also, and unless something can be done for its future than merely the prosecution of the fur trade, I fear not a great deal can be expected from it even when we have—if we are at all to have—a revival of general business.

You do me more than justice in expressing your conviction that I would gladly do anything I could for my old friends of the fur trade, and it is only reasonable to believe that Mr. —— would also do his part in a cause which is that of both shareholder and officer, and whose interests must be held to be identical. I am glad to learn that your returns, though not equal to those of last year, are still a good average, and if good prices could be only obtained the result might be a tolerably fair one after all.

I saw Wm. L. Hardisty in Winnipeg the other day. He intends, I believe, settling down at Lachine next spring and will spend the present winter at my place at Silver Heights.

It is my intention to take passage for England either on the 4th or 11th January, if possible the earlier date, returning to Montreal early in February, as I have to be in Ottawa for the Session.

During the winter 1878-9, Mr. Smith managed to procure some further concessions from the Board, and in this connection wrote to Chief Factor Rankin:

MONTREAL,
May 16, 1879.

It is quite cheering to hear from you that the exports from your inland posts speak so favourably of the prospects of trade, and my

hearty wish is that your best expectations may be realised and that prices may not only keep up but materially improve in the home markets, so that the commissioned officers may fare better than with the guarantee, which however, with the other concessions made by the Board in the negotiations I had with them, I think is all that could reasonably be expected under the circumstances. I trust all the other officers may regard it in the same light, and heartily concur in it.

His railway enterprises—of which we shall say more later—had by this time grown to such an extent as to render his further tenure of the Land Commissionership impracticable. This he explained in the following letter to Chief Factor McMurray, written on the same day as the above :

MONTREAL,
May 16, 1879.

I am now leaving for Fort Garry, to see about the land matters with Mr. Brydges, who, as you know, will soon be assuming the immediate charge of that department, thus relieving me of what it has latterly been impossible for me to continue to attend to with even ordinary regard for my own personal interests. We have also now got our St. Paul and Pacific Railway into that shape that it is to be reorganised on the 23rd instant, and this makes absolutely necessary my presence at St. Paul on that day. Everything goes well with this road, far exceeding our best expectations when we took hold of it. I mention this as I am sure you will be glad to know it.

It has already been mentioned that Mr. Smith again intervened between the Board and the officers. In June, 1880, he wrote to Chief Factor MacFarlane from Montreal :

I quite sympathise with you when you complain of having to pay quite heavy duties, and my voice has invariably been heard in opposition to such, and I am very hopeful that we may, after a little time, be somewhat relieved from this burden. My efforts in that direction will at any rate not be unused. Meantime, I fear that any such representation as you suggest to the Government would have no good result, and the missionaries as compared with the Company's officers by you will continue to have the worst of it.

Your approval of the result of my negotiations on behalf of yourself and your colleagues with the Governor and Committee during the winter of 1879, I am glad to be informed of, although I apprehend very few

of the officers had any correct idea of the great difficulties I had to contend with in undertaking the task, and certainly I would not have done so but for the very warm interest I have always felt in those who for many years were my *confrères*, and whose untiring exertions in the general interest I was and am so fully cognisant of.

There never could have been any intention on the part of the Committee to make a victim of any of those who joined in the representations which induced me to act for the officers in London, as I had come fully provided that nothing of the kind could possibly be attempted, and I will on this subject only add that while in future negotiation with the Hudson's Bay Company the officers may and no doubt will find representation infinitely more able, they cannot find one having their best interests more at heart than myself.

I was sorry to hear that provisions had been so scarce in your district last winter, which must have brought great suffering to the poor Indians. Let me thank you for your good wishes in respect of the railway in which I am interested, and am glad to say it continues to go well.

It will afford me much pleasure to hear from you as opportunity may offer, and as I am now gradually reducing the amount of personal work to which my attention has been given, I shall be glad to write you from time to time at greater length and always to be of use to you in any way in which I can.

We get further glimpses of the American "free traders" in the far north in the following highly interesting letters from Chief ~~Factor~~ Clerk K. McDonald:

FORT SIMPSON,

September, 5, 1880.

I am sorry to learn there is opposition in the fur trade at Athabasca again this year. At Rampart House the opposition instead of falling off is getting stronger. The two companies of American fur traders in the Yukon are opposing each other very strongly. In spring, at old Yukon, they put up martens to 5 M.B., beaver 3, foxes 12 to 15, black foxes 30, and bears 8 to 10. One company speaks of sending up some one to establish a post alongside of Rampart House this summer, and on my return in the fall I fully expect to find someone close to the Fort, prepared to withstand me to the death. However, notwithstanding the odds against me, I think that their trade won't amount to much. Martens are still scarce, but the Indians, from the packs they saw in spring, hoped that they would be more numerous next

winter. I hope such will be the case, for I am pretty well discouraged with the scarcity of furs for the last three years.

RAMPART HOUSE,
December, 30, 1880.

I am sorry that I have no cheerful news to tell you of the fur trade down here. The opposition from the Americans is still kept up as strong as ever, and I fear some of the Indians are beginning to be turned towards it. The excitement produced does not tend to have a beneficial effect upon the Indians, for the trade of the Americans is so reckless and so much given *gratis* that some of the Indians are becoming indolent and others dishonest. As far as I can gather, at all the posts occupied by the Americans on the Yukon, the Indians seem to be rapidly degenerating from the same reason experienced at home. I suppose that charity has a tendency to produce paupers.

The majority of the Indians here, however, are still staunch to the old Hudson's Bay Company. It is surprising that any of them prefer trading here, considering the incomparably better trade they could make with the Americans—furs at more than double and goods at half the price. A reason may be found in the fact that the Indians suspect that if this place be abandoned, they won't be so well off, for the Yankee traders are simple enough to tell them so. Yet we reflect that the Indians were never noted for providing for the future.

RAMPART HOUSE,
January 1, 1881.

Jimmy Barber is now a free trader, and he thinks himself quite a bourgeois. He went to the Yukon again in summer and brought a good deal of trading goods given him by McQuestin. He built a small house between this and La Pierre House in fall and intends doing his level best, as the Yankee would say. Half fool as he is, he managed to get a good many furs last winter from the Peel River Indians. He has made nothing of our Indians here yet, but it is possible he may get a skin or two from them this winter.

A nephew of old Sinati, Yukon Chief, is opposing me here. He is staying in a small house on the opposite side of the river. He is a great scamp and worthy of his uncle. I had a talk with him in fall and he promised faithfully to give me whatever furs he trapped or traded. Having thus put me off my guard, he traded on the sly and with the furs he set off to the Yukon. On his return, when taxed with his perfidy, he was in no wise abashed, but seemed to think himself a pretty smart fellow. Such conduct annoys one, but I hope he is an exception.

We also learn a great deal of a certain Russian Jew trader named Boscowitz, who led the Company's men a pretty dance thirty or forty years ago.

Writing from British Columbia in December, 1880, William Charles said:

That Boscowitz man bids for grandeur just to have the furs, and must lose a lot of money on some kinds of fur if he makes it on others. Boscowitz himself now lives in London, attends the Company's autumn and other sales, and has grown wealthy since he left this country. His *locum tenens* here is a German peer, a common-looking, illiterate boor, but he is too much for us, all the same. He has a better salary than I have and can afford to give champagne to almost everyone that is in the way of procuring furs. The other man, Lubbe, is a German, a well-educated man and a gentleman; he is backed by Sir Curtis Lampson.[1] I have secured very few lots in consequence of the extraordinary prices that have been paid occasionally for pure devilment. I double my bids to get a lot or two, when they go much better next time. I expend a deal of energy in this business. The proper price for beaver now should be $2.50 per hundred for number one.

A few years later the trouble is caused by a roving free-trading adventurer, named Sylvester, who bought gold dust from the Alaskan miners as well as furs. Chief ~~Factor~~ K. McDonald refers to him in the following letter:

FORT SIMPSON, B. C.,
March 7, 1887.

I came to this place by steamer, and, for the greater part of the way, the route lay among islands of picturesque beauty along the coast. The distance is about 540 miles and I arrived here on the 2nd instant, and having made myself acquainted with the place and its surroundings, have been obtaining all the information possible regarding the trade on Dease Lake and River. There is a very strong opposition up there. Mr. Sylvester is the chief trader in that section of the country, and last year imported about fifty-five tons of goods for the trade. He deals in gold dust from the miners as well as in furs. His returns in furs alone amount to about 25,000 dollars yearly, and he takes out quite a sum in gold dust besides. He is a very generous man, an extravagant trader, and is very popular among the whites and Indians, and is, moreover, a

[1] Sir Curtis was at this time out of the Company.

man of considerable means. I am going in with about 2,500 dollars worth of goods, and I feel that, with such a formidable opponent, I am in no position successfully to compete with him. He is a wealthy man and can oppose us very strongly, and is stubborn enough to do so perhaps for years. He sells the greater part of his furs in Victoria, and it is, I dare say, the best market to-day. At any rate, furs are sold in Victoria at an average of 15 per cent. over what they bring at the London sales, and he consequently is in a position to pay higher prices for them than we can.

He is also a close buyer in goods, going yearly to New York, Montreal, Victoria, and other places to make his purchases. His stock on hand after the year's trade is over is about 10,000 dollars, and it is good saleable goods. I cannot understand why the Company do not put their furs on the market in Victoria, that is the furs obtained in this quarter. They could sell much higher than they could do in London, and save freight besides. Some people cannot understand how it is that the Company have had to abandon so many posts along this coast and in the interior. The reason is simple. The Company's traders have their hands tied by a tariff, and the sales are by no means the best that can be made, for an auction always means a sacrifice. I have suggested that Sylvester be bought out. I am satisfied he would sell out for 12,000 dollars. In that event the Company would have his posts and would control the whole of the fur trade in that quarter. Only let us get Sylvester's posts and they could defy any party who might undertake to oppose them. I know it is said that the buying-out principle is a wrong one, but this is an exploded idea. It was all well enough when the Hudson's Bay Company was in a position to freeze out a party, but times have changed. I would also strongly recommend having a steamer of our own, which could be used the whole season on the Skeena and Stickine. It is not much to say that a steamer of 30 tons at a cost of 7,000 dollars, could be made to pay for herself in two years. At present the Company are paying heavy rates for their freight. With our own steamer we could secure a good part of the freighting for mines, and also obtain the trade with them, which is quite an item.

From Chief Factor Roderick MacFarlane.

Fort Chipewyan,
March 2, 1882.

The Board of Directors have graciously undertaken to ensure us the continuance of the existing handsome guarantee of £200 per 1/100th share for a further term of three years, beginning with Outfit 1882. I suppose we ought to be more grateful than we are for all that

they have *so generously* done for the commissioned officers since and under reorganisation. Shall I enumerate some of these acts of appreciation of our service? First they give us nothing for Outfit 1875, £100 per share for Outfit 1876, to which the officers own reserve fund contributed £5,000. While their unjust (discontinued of late) assumption of 3/5th of all the unappropriated fur trade vacancies more than made up for all the difference, and I believe also, most if not all that has been subsequently required to make up the £150 guarantee for 1877, and the £200 for Outfits 1878 and 1879.

There can be no doubt that the transfer of the country to Canada and our exclusion from all interest in the lands around, and especially of the Post established and kept up at the expense of the fur trade (you know that the Winnipeg and the old Red River colony cost tens of thousands of pounds sterling) for which no compensation has ever been made, has been a very bad business for the commissioned officers. Their annual incomes have not come up for the decade just ended to much more than half the amount realised by their predecessors. Were we as well remunerated, we could not complain, but in the face of the tens of thousands already secured by the shareholders, and the prospect of millions ahead, it is contrary to reason and human nature to expect us to be satisfied with a state of affairs that has so injuriously affected our pecuniary interest. Let the Directors or shareholders, or indeed any impartial person, compare the statement of profits realised by the officers from 1821 to 1871, and then to the year 1881, and as men of honour and integrity they cannot help admitting that justice calls for a radical redress of our well-grounded grievances.

Whatever doubts might have been entertained as to the right of the fur trade to participate in the sales of lands in the so-called "fertile belt," I firmly believe that our claim to a share of the 50,000 acres around our establishment was not only, as admitted, morally strong, but legally good, and that this view would have been confirmed had the question been submitted to the decision of a court of Law and Equity. But all this is useless now, you will say. Still under the bright prospect of the future, so far as the shareholders are concerned, the Directors ought to give some effect to these doubts and facts in favour of those whose services hitherto have been so miserably and inadequately remunerated.

Had our Canadian investments been of late years as profitable as formerly, we might not have felt the comparative poverty of our position so very keenly. Many of us have large families; some have served twenty to thirty years and upwards, and for what?

Financial Considerations

From Chief ~~Factor~~ Trader Roderick MacKenzie.

Melbourne, Que.,

June 11, 1883.

Our mutual kind and generous-hearted friend, Chief Factor Barnston[1] has gone the way of all the earth. There are not many living now who were the guiding spirits of the Hudson's Bay Company when we came to the country first. It is a warning to us, my dear sir, that our time is drawing near. May our Heavenly Father prepare us for the great change.

What sort of weather have you got in the North-West? How changed is that country from the solitude you first saw—thousands of people coming in every week. I often wonder how they can be fed? I am afraid many of them will starve, both from want of food and the inclemency of the weather, before they get their houses built.

As an illustration of the financial relations existing between Mr. Smith and the commissioned officers of the Company for many years the following letter from Mr. Smith may serve:

Montreal,

December 11, 1882.

You refer to the surprise and disappointment felt by some of our friends in the North-West at "the low rate of interest, 5 and 6 per cent., at which some recent investments have been placed."

I am sorry to say that no better rates can be obtained here on such undoubted security of the principal as we have always endeavoured to procure; and indeed it is even more difficult just now to get these figures than it was some two or three years back to obtain 7, 8, and even 9 per cent. Nor, in my opinion, is there a prospect of any great increase in the value of money for some time to come, owing in great measure to the very large amounts of English and French capital seeking investment on this continent for which they are willing to accept less than five per cent. Hereafter, as in the past, we shall always endeavour to do the best for our friends whose money matters we attend to, but you will, I am sure, quite agree with me in believing that it is far better to be contented with a moderate rate, as interest now goes, than to attempt to get more at risk to moneys invested. Perhaps you will make this explanation to any of the gentlemen in your district to whom you may consider it desirable to do so.

Mr. G——— informed me in September last that you had requested him to draw on me for one thousand dollars for your account, for the

[1] Mr. Smith served under Mr. Barnston at Tadousac in 1841.

purpose of some investment in steamboats in the North-West, to which I demurred in the first instance, as I had received no intimation from yourself to that effect, but on being assured by Mr. G——— that it was your particular wish that he should receive the money, I advised him that, although I considered the transaction far from regular, I would under the circumstances accept his draft on your behalf for the amount; the money was in consequence paid to him on the 9th October.

May I ask, however, that when it is your wish to have any further payments made on your account, you will be good enough to advise me of the same *direct*, as you will see how very inconvenient, and against your own interest, it might be, were we to make such payments on the *ipse dixit* of this or that person who might chance to make a requisition upon me on your account.

Following the "boom" or speculation in land which took place in Winnipeg, and elsewhere in Manitoba, for some time prior to 1882, public attention was directed in Canada to the management of the Land Department of the Hudson's Bay Company. The Board in London sent their representative to Winnipeg to inquire and report on the subject in 1882 and 1883. The directors, however, were unwilling to make any radical changes in the arrangement which had been pursued in the Land Department abroad. When, however, they held their annual meeting in London in November, 1883, the subject was discussed.

Mr. Donald A. Smith, who had been the largest shareholder prior to that date, spoke at length and made suggestions for some changes. He did not, however, receive any support from the Board of Directors. Consequently, he voted against their re-election and proposed a new body of members, some of whom were found to be ineligible, and the list was incomplete. This led to a conference between the old directors and Mr. Smith. The result of this was that a compromise was proposed and accepted, which was confirmed at a subsequent meeting of the shareholders. Mr. Elvin Colville retained the position of Governor, the bulk of the old directors resigned, and Mr. Smith and Sir Charles Russell, Q.C., M.P., became directors.

Director of the Company

A letter Mr. Smith wrote on his return to Chief Factor MacFarlane explains itself :

MONTREAL,
January 8, 1884.

You have done a good work in having a steamer built in Athabasca, and I can quite understand the difficulties you have had to contend with, under the circumstances you explain. The ultimate saving of cost in the transport business, and the greater facilities thus given for conducting the business advantageously, will, it is to be hoped, tell favourably on the result of trade, both in Athabasca and Mackenzie River district, and when it may be possible to supplement this by having a steamer on the Mackenzie River still further reduction may be looked for in the expenses of distributing supplies and sending out the returns. You have, of course, given your views fully on the subject to the Company, through the Fur Trade Commissioner, and I feel satisfied that, when submitted in due form by him, they will be carefully considered.

Having only just returned from England, I am unable at present to write you fully as I could wish, but it will be always very pleasing to me to have your views with regard to the business which you have been so long connected with and which you know so intimately, and when I can be of use at any time in forwarding your wishes, be assured it would give me pleasure to do so.

You will no doubt learn by letters and papers, reaching you by the winter express that some changes have taken place in the *personnel* of the Hudson's Bay Company. These changes were insisted on by myself, and although personally I did not care to be on the direction, still from the part I took in the matter, I felt that it was owing to my friends I should not decline to act. The constitution of the Committee as at first elected, as you will see, has been modified, the old Directors having made advances to me with a view to compromise which, considering all the circumstances of the case, I thought well to accede to in part. I have no doubt that the present members of the committee will be prepared to do anything necessary for putting their affairs in this country on a satisfactory footing, where they have not been altogether for some time back.

This was a dramatic coup indeed! Writing to a brother officer on March 7th, 1884, Chief Factor Fortescue said :

YORK FACTORY.

What do you think of all the news by the Winter Packet ? Donald A. Smith upsetting the whole directorate and his open charge against some of the principal officers of the Company in Canada.

Has this anything to do with the testimonial to the present Chief Commissioner sent from council last summer? I think it only fair to tell you that I declined to sign the papers. I didn't like the tone of them. They are inapplicable to an outsider, and I disapprove of alienating permanently our right of nomination, as far as it remains to us, for commissions. I think if sanctioned, we shall ever regret the step taken.

But the London directors and the mass of shareholders had gone too far and too fast. They might, under threats, exchange one instrument for another, but the steady sacrifice of the right of the unfortunate winter partners was not to be checked by the efforts of a single champion.

It was at this juncture that the boldest of the fur-traders, allied by blood and marriage to the bravest and most daring of the old North-Westers, Chief Factor R. MacFarlane, addressed an earnest memorial to the Company:

Salisbury Hotel,
London, *May* 1, 1886.

As a Chief Factor and one who has been engaged in the service of the Company for upwards of 35 years, I am intimately acquainted both with the workings of the fur trade, and also personally with the feelings and opinions of my fellow commissioned officers, and as such I now address you on my own and on their behalf.

I am sorry to have to bring before you the fact that our position has been lately rapidly growing worse, and that although our responsibilities and labours remain as great as ever and our living expenses have increased, our remuneration has decreased and our prospects of improvement have dwindled away to almost nothing. We who have been long in the service can look back on the days when the officers used to retire on a sufficient competence after a hard life of toil, whilst we ourselves see no prospect of ever doing much beyond making a bare living for ourselves and families.

On this head I would call attention to the fact that I believe this is perhaps the only Association of equal importance and permanent character which does not provide retiring pensions for its officers, and this can only be explained by the fact that in bygone days the profits of the officers were sufficient to enable them to put by money, and

that, if this had not been the case, the necessity of pensions would long ago have arisen.

The fact I mention of the great falling off in commissioned officers' prospects is well known to you. The statement of profits I left with you recently shows that the profit per share used to be over £490 a year, whereas now they are little over £200 a year. This is attributable to the sale of the Company's chartered rights to the Canadian Government, to the railroad building and influx of settlers, to the heavy duties now levied on imports, and generally to the competition in the fur trade which has almost doubled the prices we now have to pay for fur.

Several of these reasons, whilst operating most disadvantageously to the partners in the fur trade, are for the great benefit of the shareholders generally, notably the influx of settlers and consequent sales of land by which the capital of the Company is being repaid, whilst we the officers, who originally shared in all the profits of the Company, are now practically limited to that part of the business which suffers most by the very causes which make the prosperity of the other part.

Under the circumstances, I beg that Governor and Directors will take into their earnest consideration the necessity of raising the minimum guarantee on each share to at least £250 a year, the lowest sum, I submit, on which the officers can maintain themselves properly and save something; and further that if, at the end of five years, it appears that the sums paid on each share under guarantee and profits have not amounted to £300 a year, then that the deficiency be made up in the fifth year.

I should point out on this head that if the commercial business should prove as profitable as is hoped, this additional guarantee will entail no cost upon the Company.

You will pardon my apparent insistence on this matter. As one of your oldest officers, I have the best interests of the Company and of my fellow officers at heart, and I feel convinced that it is your desire that we should do our work, not only zealously, but also hopefully, which we cannot do under our present circumstances.

Poor blind Belisarius begging his obolus from Dives who had taken from him his inheritance! If the future historian desires to turn a strong light upon the inner life, hopes and prospects of the fur-traders of the remote posts of the Company at this period, let him peruse the following letter from Chief Factor James L. Cotter. It will reveal much:

Moose Factory,
July 10, 1886.

It is a self-evident fact that nothing can be done without union. That the discontent you speak of is felt more or less all over the country there can be no doubt, but whether all will combine to give forcible utterance to it is another thing. In 1878 the Western officers refused to join the others; at the same time they reaped the benefit of the stand made by their brethren. At that time I threw in my lot with the majority, and if things had gone against us God knows what would have become of me for I had not a sixpence to live on. I am now in my thirtieth year of service, and see no prospect of ever being able to retire on anything beyond a mere pittance. My health is delicate and I could not now go at anything else in the way of business; so I am beset with difficulties and anxieties on all hands. I suppose I am the poorest C.F. in the service.

You will pardon me for troubling you with these particulars. I only do so to enable you to know something of the man with whom you have to deal, and how his circumstances must necessarily colour his opinions and give bias to his actions.

I do think we are hardly treated by the Board, and that an endeavour to get "better terms" should be made; yet—and here lies my difficulty—I question if I have any right to stake on one cast the bread and butter of a young large family. I walk on the brink of a precipice, one false step and the toil and suffering of a lifetime are thrown away, and those dependent on me reduced to poverty. I am too old to pick myself up again if I fall. Of course, it is possible that a firm combination of the officers might make success certain; but to that is added the dread that the Board, to avenge their defeat, would proceed to lop off the tallest heads; and the existing C.F.'s would speedily find themselves shelved. If the choice lay between being tolerably well off in the service and just a little less well off out of it, in short if the stake were not so big to me as it is, there would be little difficulty in making up one's mind which course to pursue. But when it is a matter of bread and butter on the one hand, and starvation on the other, one may well pause and consider the consequences which might accrue should circumstances throw one at the mercy of relentless enemies. If I were a bachelor and misfortune befell myself alone, I could face it; but a lot of helpless children wanting food, clothing and education!—I cannot bear the thought of it; I would rather die than see it.

I should only be too glad if we could get the £250. I am, however, thankful for the £200, my only complaint about it being that it is not a certainty, but a thing niggardly promised as it were from year to year.

I say I am thankful, *but I am not satisfied.* What I want is a sure and certain minimum of £250 and a retiring interest, the same as under the old regime. That is what I want, and with that I could jog on in some sort of hope. You certainly hit the nail on the head when you spoke of your being unable to work hopefully under the present circumstances. We work as if at the pumps of a sinking ship. It is a strained and unhealthy state of mind.

As he was now a director, Mr. Smith could not formally represent the wintering partners as an outsider. But he entered sympathetically into their grievance as of old, and always lent them his support.

The author of the "Great Lone Land," Sir William Butler, wrote to Mr. MacFarlane:

I am sorry to hear you have had such an uphill struggle with the Board. A Corporation has no conscience. I believe that selfish greed of place and profit has stamped out the last vestige of honour from our public bodies, and most of our public men, and that at no time in our history has rampant injustice had greater sway than now.

But if I know anything of you, you are not the man to give up without a good fight. Sir Donald Smith is, I think, *obliged* to be what the French call an "opportunist," but I have always known he meant well.

The Board, however, conferred with the shareholders, who finally consented to a measure of justice to the wintering partners.

Some two years later, in 1889, he who had for so many years been the outstanding figure in the once mighty fur trade of Canada became the titular Governor of the Hudson's Bay Company. The suffrages of his fellow-directors elected Donald Smith to this position, first filled by Prince Rupert of the Rhine. The position had lost its pristine glory; but the romance of the young Scottish lad who, beginning at the lowest rung of the ladder, had finally achieved the summit, served again to shed, while he lived, a lustre on the chair. In another chapter I purpose returning to his connection with the fur trade and the correspondence of the veterans who still lingered on the scene.

CHAPTER XVII

THE ST. PAUL AND PACIFIC RAILWAY (1873-78)

UNTIL the "sixties" of the last century the only means of commercial transportation between the Hudson's Bay Company's territories in the Canadian West and the Atlantic seaboard was by ox-cart from Winnipeg to St. Paul, Minnesota, and thence down the Mississipi River by steamboat to some one of the railways leading from that river to Chicago.

By way of experiment a small steamer, capable, so the wits said, of travelling "on a heavy dew," was placed upon the Red River. Finding it was too small for the trade, the Company built a larger steamer, the *International,* and on May 26th, 1862, the first trip of this steamboat to Fort Garry was made. For the ensuing nine years the *International* continued on the route from Abercrombie and Georgetown to Winnipeg, carrying goods to and fro for the benefit of the Company and the settlers.

We have seen how, in 1870, Mr. James Jerome Hill had paid his first visit to Winnipeg, and he had made *en route* the acquaintance of Commissioner Donald A. Smith. Hill's business connections with the Red River Settlement seemed to him now to justify his having a steamer of his own. Therefore he built one, the *Selkirk.* As a naturalised American, he enjoyed certain technical advantages over the owners of a rival boat. To readjust the situation, Mr. Smith, as the chief officer of the Hudson's Bay Company, caused the *International* forthwith to be transferred to the Company's agent in St. Paul, Mr. Norman W. Kittson, to be operated as a regular passenger and freight boat in opposition to Hill's *Selkirk.* The outcome of the competition between

these two steamers (the history of which is not without some elements of Mark Twainish humour) was an amalgamation of the interests of Messrs. Kittson and Hill, and the formation of the Red River Transportation Company under Kittson's management.

The merchants of Winnipeg immediately raised an outcry against this monopoly; and with the object of lowering rates which they deemed excessive, founded—in conjunction with others in Minneapolis—an opposition line. Two steamers, the *Manitoba* and *Minnesota,* were built to compete with the Hill-Kittson Company. But this Merchants' Line, as it was called, soon succumbed to its more powerful competitor. The latter eventually purchased the steamers and added them to their fleet, which numbered seven vessels in 1878. As for the mails, they continued to be carried by stage-coach until the opening, many years later, of the Pembina branch of the Canadian Pacific Railway.

In the year 1857 the American Congress passed an Act making a grant of land to the territory of Minnesota, to aid the construction of the Minnesota and Pacific Railway from St. Paul via St. Anthony (Minneapolis) to the head of navigation on the Red River. In May of the same year the Minnesota Legislature authorised the Minnesota and Pacific Railroad Company, with a capital of $5,000,000, to build a railroad from Stillwater, via St. Cloud and St. Anthony, to the town of Breckenridge, with a branch from St. Anthony, via St. Cloud and Crow Wing, to St. Vincent, near the mouth of the Pembina River. But this projected line was not even begun, and the company languished till 1861, when an Act was passed to facilitate the construction of the Minnesota and Pacific Railway.

The great Civil War then broke out, and further delay occurred. A year later another Act was passed, changing the name of the company to the " St. Paul and Pacific Railroad Company," and requiring it to complete the portion

of the road between St. Paul and St. Anthony by the following January 1st, and to St. Cloud by January 1st, 1865. The ten miles between St. Paul and St. Anthony, the first stitch in the network of railways which now covers the State of Minnesota, were forthwith built in accordance with the provisions of the Act.

At the time when it ran as far as Breckenridge, the St. Paul and Pacific Railway was a very poor affair, and its service in handling the Hudson's Bay Company's traffic highly unsatisfactory. "On each of the visits of Mr. Smith to Mr. Hill it was violently damned by the one and spoken of deprecatingly by the other, each in his own characteristic way."[1]

The truth is this railway, which had swallowed up vast sums of money, came to a standstill, so far as construction went, for want of funds. It was the victim—a typical case—of railway financiers and construction companies. It was mortgaged and the mortgages were foreclosed. Then it was re-mortgaged. Yet throughout these transactions its charter, giving it extensive and valuable land grants, still continued valid. Finally, it tempted a syndicate of Dutch capitalists to intervene; and they, on the strength of the land securities and the great prospects of the line, if completed, were induced to purchase $13,380,000 of its bonds, and, by completing the road, to avert a forfeiture of its land grant.

This was the situation when Mr. Smith first became acquainted with the enterprise. Evil fortune, however, continued to haunt it; and in 1873 the St. Paul and Pacific Railroad Company became bankrupt.

Leaving for a moment this bankruptcy of a road which was to exert so vast an influence upon Mr. Smith's fortunes, let us glance at the general railway situation in Western Canada at that period.

Manitoba and the West had long been crying aloud for effective railway communication with the outer world.

[1] Sir William Van Horne.

British Columbia continued to demand a fulfilment of the pledge by which she had been induced to enter the Dominion.

The fall of the Macdonald Government was a serious blow to the fortunes of the North-West, which up to this time had appeared to be prospering. It postponed for years the completion of the great main line of the railway to the Pacific, which Alexander Mackenzie and his colleagues forthwith attempted to construct piecemeal as a Government work, and in connection with the discredited land-and-water Dawson route, stretching between Red River and Lake Superior.

The Act of 1874 allowed for the construction of a railway on the Pacific Coast, provided the construction could be made without increasing taxation. The road was to run from near Lake Nipissing to the Pacific, and to be divided into four sections—the first, from Nipissing to the west end of Lake Superior; the second, from Lake Superior to Red River; the third, from Red River to Edmonton or the foot of the Rocky Mountains; and the fourth, from there to the Pacific Coast. There were also to be two branch lines—one to extend from the proposed eastern terminus to a point on Georgian Bay, and the other from the main line near Fort Garry to some point near Pembina. Each branch was to form a part of the main line, and to be an independent section; and a subsidy of $10,000 a mile and 20,000 acres in alternate blocks was offered for any portion built and operated as a private enterprise.

In the House of Commons Mr. Smith deeply regretted that party feeling should have been permitted in anywise to enter in the discussion of an enterprise with which the fortunes of Canada were closely bound up, and which demanded the cordial co-operation of the whole country. Speaking on the question in April, 1876, he said:

> The whole people of Manitoba would be gratified by the assurance—the reassurance on the part of the Government—that they intend to carry through—or rather that they do not propose to

abandon—their intention of constructing an all-rail road from Lake Superior to Manitoba. For I distinctly understood that their purpose all along has been to complete the road between these two points with all possible dispatch, merely using the water courses in the meantime during the progress of the work, and not substituting them for any portion of the road. More than this it would be absurd to demand.

It is admitted on all hands that we have undertaken an obligation towards British Columbia to build a railway through to the Pacific, and I for one hold that everything that is practicable should be done to carry out this engagement.

British Columbia, in view of its great natural resources, abounding as it does in mineral wealth, is well worthy of our best attention and consideration; and although less generally known, its agricultural and pastural capabilities are also of a high order. I consider that we have cause to congratulate ourselves on having added to the Dominion so fair a Province, and I trust and believe that, however we may differ on minor points, the people of British Columbia, convinced by the determination of Canada faithfully to fulfil all her obligations to the utmost extent that the resources of the Dominion permit, will never ask to recede from Confederation. British Columbia, with her resources fully developed, will greatly add to the importance and prosperity of the Dominion, and the main question now to be considered is how far the resources of Canada will warrant the vigorous prosecution of this work.

In the opinion of the member for Selkirk, the route was "all very well so long as they had nothing better." For several years it had served a very good purpose in causing a reduction of the charges made by American companies for the transport of passengers and freight. But the people of Manitoba were most anxious to have at the earliest possible moment railway communication between Pembina and Fort Garry. They certainly desired, and hoped shortly to see, an all-rail route constructed from one ocean to the other, but they were eager to have connection with Pembina in the meantime. Mr. Smith continued:

Something has been said of the magnificent water-courses of the North-West. Statements have been made to the effect that they were a myth. It is said that they have not yet been discovered by those who have travelled over the country. My own impression

is that there are some stretches of water there that may properly and soberly be called magnificent. Lake Winnipeg is certainly no inconsiderable expanse of water itself, and from this lake, with a very little barrier, an entrance is made into the Saskatchewan. From that point there are three hundred miles of uninterrupted water communication. At the end of those three hundred miles it is necessary to transport freight for four miles by land, and having again reached the Saskatchewan you can go for nine hundred or one thousand miles into the interior and within seventy or eighty miles of the Rocky Mountains.

While almost wholly useless as an emigration route, the Dawson route, in Mr. Smith's opinion, had been of very great advantage in transporting supplies to the North-West. The very fact of its being turned over to a company in 1874 had the effect of making the Minnesota lines reduce their transportation rates still further.

They are shrewd men, and, having very little confidence in their own Government, they thought the competing Dawson route would be more efficiently managed by the contractor than by the Canadian Government. My opinion is that the Administration should still be prepared to carry emigrants and freight by the Dawson route if any attempt is made by the Americans to enforce higher rates. It should not be given up altogether. I understand the Americans will still further reduce their rates this year. It is hardly fair to say it is money thrown away to spend on the railroads connecting with the water-ways, provided they are adapted for an all-rail road and the route is not too indirect.

At Manitoba, on another occasion, Mr. Smith said :

While I do not want to be an apologist for the Government in its construction of the Georgian Bay branch and the railroad here, I know it is a great deal easier to construct the road as they are doing and far cheaper. I believe it is being pushed forward as fast as the finances of the country will allow, and I agree that the Pembina branch ought not to delay the construction of the main line. At the same time I do not believe that the building of this road to Pembina will stand in the way.

On another occasion he told his constituents :

We looked confidently forward to the construction of the Pembina branch ; and great was our disappointment when the American

railway connecting on the other side of the boundary line became disorganised. It was stopped sixty miles before reaching the boundary, barring us as completely from outer communication as if the rails had not been laid beyond Breckenridge. Efforts were made by the Minnesota Government to take up the railway again, but the surrounding circumstances were such that no one could be induced to have anything to do with it.

It happens that I had friends in London and Montreal who were interested in this country. But when these gentlemen were consulted with reference to a railroad to Manitoba, one might just as well have suggested to them a road to the North Pole. So little was known of this part of Canada that capitalists could not be induced to embark their wealth in the enterprise, and for a time I desisted.

When speaking of all these great public undertakings not having been more rapidly advanced, Mr. Smith pointed out the extraordinary financial depression which just then existed, "a depression more severe than had been known for many years." It was a period of embarrassment not confined to the Dominion, but extending over the United States, England and the Continent, and railroad enterprises had been greatly retarded by it.

It is interesting to recall that at this time (1876) Mr. Smith did not believe in the practicability of the transcontinental railway being built by a private company. "I will give it as my opinion," he said, "that if it is to be accomplished at all, it must be directly by the Government and not through the instrumentality of a company, as was at one time proposed."

When a fellow-member spoke of the Canadian Pacific Railway Company of 1873 as having been composed of "most honourable men, well qualified to carry out this great undertaking, and who would have accomplished it had they not been interfered with by outside influences," Mr. Smith said :

The gentlemen who composed that Company were doubtless men of the highest respectability, and some of them possessed great wealth, but I would have asked the right hon. gentleman for Kingston,[1] if

[1] Sir John Macdonald.

he had been in his place to-night, if the gallant knight, Sir Hugh Allan, who presided over the Company, had not, before leaving this country, misgivings as to the success of the mission he was about to undertake. I will not ask his hon. friend from Cumberland,[1] and the other members of the late Government who sit near him, whether within eight days after the deputation reached London those gentlemen were not convinced that it was impossible to procure the money required on the terms proposed, and, in fact, that nothing short of a guarantee from the Canadian Government of interest to some extent on the whole amount of the bonds could induce capitalists to embark on the enterprise. This, it must be borne in mind, was before any party influence had been brought to play—if, indeed, such had been at all employed, which I am not inclined to believe—to thwart the scheme. I had been in England about that time, and had learned on what I believed to be the best authority, that the capitalists with whom the Company wished to negotiate would not touch the proposition on any terms other than a Government guarantee.[2]

Finally, the Mackenzie Government pressed forward the road. When the survey across Manitoba was made, much to the general disappointment and to the disgust of Mr. Smith's constituents, the plans showed that it avoided Winnipeg altogether, taking a course much farther north. Here was a bitter pill to swallow.

With Mr. Fleming the member for Selkirk was on terms of great intimacy, and he earnestly besought him to demonstrate the reasons for the northerly route. "If this is persisted in, Mr. Fleming," he exclaimed, "I might as well resign my representation of Selkirk in the House of Commons."

He and Fleming went over the plans carefully, and although at the end of a four hours' interview the member for Selkirk was unconvinced of the necessity for the change, he was fully convinced of Fleming's belief in such necessity.

With this conviction he faced a stormy meeting of his constituents.

It was said that the chief engineer had arrived at this

[1] Hon. Charles Tupper.
[2] *Parliamentary Debates*, April, 1876.

decision far too rapidly and without sufficient data. Mr. Smith pointed out that engineers were provided with staffs of assistants to aid them, and that a man of such high character as Mr. Fleming would not come forward to give recommendations of this description unless he believed he were acting in accord with the best interests of the country. He reminded his hearers further that another engineer, Mr. Marcus Smith, made a report similar to that of Mr. Fleming. He continued :

As far as I am concerned, I have always, both in and out of the House of Commons, urged that the Canadian Pacific Railway should be run by the southern and not by the northern route. On every possible occasion I have urged this on the Government, and I have used every effort to secure railroad communication through the Province. I have not only taken an active part myself, but I have induced others to do so.

And again :

To us this comes as a great disappointment. It is almost unendurable that the railway, instead of passing through the centre of the Province, is to go a considerable distance to the north, touching it only at one point. The Ministry of Public Works gives as a reason for this that there would be a saving of thirty miles. That certainly is a very great consideration from a Dominion point of view. If this principle is to be maintained throughout the whole line, we can hardly look for an exception in favour of Manitoba, no matter how much we may regret the fact. A deputation from Manitoba has had an interview with the Minister of Public Works, and but little hope is held out of a change in the route. However, as we cannot have this, I am glad to find an indication of willingness on the part of the Government to assist the people of Manitoba in building another line south of Lake Manitoba and running westward and southward—such assistance to be in the shape of grants of land. I earnestly trust that this disposition will be borne out by fact, and that such assistance will be given as will give our people the means of sending their produce out of the Province to a favourable market.

Mr. Smith had in view a road running from Fort Garry westward towards the south branch of the Saskatchewan for a distance of from 100 to 110 miles within the Province of Manitoba. It might extend, however, for 600 or 700

miles farther to that portion of the country known as Bow River. That route would be south of the arid country stretching to a considerable extent through the British possessions of the North-West. It had been said that the desire was to bring this road too far south to meet the requirements of the great body of the people of the Province. He denied that this was the case, and declared that the requirements of the greater number would be duly considered before the Government would be asked for any assistance.

Yet, even while he professed submission, he did not abandon hope that the course of the railway might be changed. In a phrase which he afterwards used on many other occasions, "It must not be," he said repeatedly to the Premier, "I tell you, Mr. Mackenzie, it must not be, it really *must not be.*"[1]

Time passed; events happened, and "it," so greatly deprecated, was not.

We will now return to the St. Paul and Pacific Railroad Company, over whose lines traffic between the Red River and St. Paul then passed, and which had become bankrupt in 1873. The railroad was partially completed, in poor condition—for the rails were of iron, not steel, and fast rusting—and laden with a heavy burden of bonds, owned mostly by financiers in Holland. On the other hand, it had a land grant that might be valuable later (if it could be saved), and terminal facilities in St. Paul, of considerable present and great potential value. It was also the predestined continuous railroad route to Winnipeg by its authorised line down the Red River Valley to the international boundary, some sections of which had been built and were lying there in the general demoralisation. When Mr. Smith saw that construction had stopped, and that those in control of the property were not likely to complete it, he began to consider if there were any other means to that end.

"He discussed the matter with Mr. Norman Kittson,

[1] *See* p. 417.

and he also found that Mr. Hill had the same idea; both believed thoroughly in the country and its possibilities, and in the value of the property if it could be secured, rehabilitated and extended. Every year, from 1873 on, Mr. Smith passed through St. Paul frequently, and the three men in their conversation came to have a practical idea of what would have to be done, and finally to regard a purchase of the defaulted railway bonds as something that might be attempted.

"By 1876 the time appeared to be ripe for action. The prospects of the property and the country were improving. Legislation had been passed making it possible to reorganise a railroad company under foreclosure, allowing the bondholders to buy in the property and reorganise without forfeiting the privileges belonging to the former company. So, in March of that year, Mr. Hill, being in Ottawa, met Mr. Smith at his house there, and they decided that the opportune time had come and that a practical effort should now be made to see at what price the bonds could be bought.

"One of Mr. Smith's intimate friends was Mr. George Stephen, afterwards Lord Mount Stephen, the President of the Bank of Montreal. From the first he had endeavoured to interest Mr. Stephen in the plan. The latter, who was not at first familiar with the country or the property, for a time believed it not practicable, and perhaps not desirable. Mr. Smith's continued representations finally induced him to consider it more favourably, and in the spring of 1877 he joined with the others in the enterprise and the effort to raise, through moneyed men in London and elsewhere, the funds necessary to buy the bonds."[1]

"When the St. Paul and Pacific Railway Company became bankrupt," wrote Sir William Van Horne, "it occurred to Messrs. Smith and Hill that they might help the transportation difficulty and do something for themselves, and for the country as well, by getting control somehow of

[1] Memorandum of J. J. Hill.

Photo: Notman

SIR WILLIAM VAN HORNE

A Pioneer of Canadian Railways; he died on September 11th, 1915

the broken-down property. They needed, first of all, a financier, and Mr. Smith brought the subject to the attention of his cousin, George Stephen (now Lord Mount Stephen), a prominent Montreal merchant and President of the Bank of Montreal, who at first scouted the idea. But Mr. Smith was, as always, persistent, and he gave Mr. Stephen no rest.

"Just then occurred a serious failure of a steel company in Illinois, which involved the Chicago agency of the Bank of Montreal in a heavy loss, and Mr. Stephen, with Mr. Richard B. Angus, the General Manager of the Bank, hastened to Chicago to do what they could. After some days the proceedings of the law courts gave them a week of idleness, and they tossed a coin to determine whether to use it in a visit to St. Paul or St. Louis.

"Fortunately for them, it fell to St. Paul, and Stephen said, 'I am rather glad of that, for it will give us an opportunity to see the railroad Smith has talked about so much.' They had heard of Mr. Hill through Mr. Smith, and on reaching St. Paul they looked him up. He arranged for a special train to Breckenridge, and they ran out one day and returned at night.

"Mr. Stephen had never before seen a prairie, and was much impressed by its beauties and possibilities; although at the time the plague of locusts, which had infested all that region for nearly two years, and which continued more than a year afterwards, had given the country a bleak and barren look, and had compelled nearly all the settlers to abandon their homes in despair. Mr. Stephen knew that such plagues had visited many parts of the world many times since history began, knew that they were frequent and never continued long, and he gave the locusts no serious thought. He knew the Americans, and knew that the settlers would quickly return to the lands when the locusts should go, and that these settlers would prosper and be followed by many more.

"Then came visits to the representatives of the Dutch bondholders whose interest was long in default. Mr. Stephen urged these bondholders to join him and his friends in reorganising the company and extending the railroad down the valley of the Red River some hundreds of miles to the Canadian boundary, and spoke of the great fortunes to be made by it. But the Dutchmen were not to be moved. They had lost much money, they were tired and disgusted, and the locusts were yet there.

"'Take our bonds at a price and make all that money yourselves,' said they. Mr. Stephen replied that he and his associates could not take the bonds at any price unless they could be sure of the necessary legislation in Minnesota.

"'How long will that take?' asked the Dutchmen.

"'Six months,' replied Mr. Stephen.

"'Then,' said the Dutchmen, 'we will give you an option for a nominal amount on our bonds for eight months at a price less than the accrued interest on them.' And Stephen came away with the option.

"This was in 1876. An association was immediately formed, consisting of George Stephen, Donald A. Smith, James J. Hill, Richard B. Angus, John B. Kennedy, and Norman W. Kittson. The comparatively small amount required for preliminary expenses was provided between them, the reorganisation plan was carried out, the necessary legislation hurried through at St. Paul by Mr. Hill, and the St. Paul, Minneapolis and Manitoba Railway Company (now called the Great Northern) was born. New bonds were created for putting the old railway in order, for new equipment, and for the extension northward. Enough of these bonds were quickly marketed to pay off the Dutch bondholders. Then more were sold and active operations began; and then early in July, 1877, the locusts disappeared. Immediately the settlers who had left the country returned, and the suspended movement of people to the western lands was resumed at an enormously increased rate.

" From that time to this the history of the company has been one of enterprise, energy and boundless success. The railway built up the country, and the fortunes of its promoters grew apace. The names of these men are held almost in reverence throughout the vast region served by the many thousands of miles of railways they have made, and among these names not the least is that of Donald A. Smith (Lord Strathcona). The great corporation created by these men, unlike some of the earlier American railway corporations, has never been smirched by charges of stock-jobbing, money-grabbing or questionable practices of any kind. The vast rewards which have come to it represent merely a fair participation in the wealth its founders created for the country at large."

According to Mr. Hill, " The old bonds were turned in at varying prices, which, though more or less below face were well above their market value at the time. Payment was to be made within six months of the sale of the properties under foreclosure, either in gold or in first mortgage gold bonds of the new company to be organised by the associates. Until then they were to pay interest on the purchase price, and they assumed all the risks and all the expenses of completing unfinished lines. It was stipulated under bond that they should build to St. Vincent as quickly as possible, and, in any case, within two years from date. They pledged all they had in the world to carry through what nearly everybody then regarded as a probable failure.

" The new control pushed matters. The new lines were built, operation was systematised, the seasons were favourable, settlers came pouring in, the country developed, the business of the railroad grew. On May 23rd, 1879, these four men, together with a representative of the banking house of John S. Kennedy and Company, of New York City, organised the St. Paul, Minneapoils and Manitoba Railroad Company, the parent company of the Great Northern of today. From that time onward the history of the enterprise

in which Donald A. Smith had so large a share was one of unceasing growth and increasing prosperity."[1]

Having by these strenuous exertions acquired the road and carried it to the Canadian boundary, the next step was to obtain a lease of the line of railway which had been built by the Government from Winnipeg to Pembina, in order to link it there with the St. Paul and Pacific.

In every country there is a set of men so jealous of capital, and suspicious of enterprise likely to create wealth for others than themselves, that—should a political antagonism also exist—they will spare no effort to defeat a project destined for the public good. It was so in this case. One records with regret that Sir John Macdonald opposed the granting of the lease, chiefly because he was advised that the Government of the day intended to grant it and he, then, was in opposition, but partly because he had not yet forgiven Mr. Smith for his failure to support him at the crisis of 1873. Forces were brought to bear to defeat the measure, but in vain.

A great deal was said at the time about the existence of a railway monopoly which would grind down the farmers and producers of the North-West. In 1878 Mr. Smith stated :

> It is important for the Government to have connection made with advantage to the railway ; but the Government has secured the people against extortion or excess of charges. If I say anything on behalf of the St. Paul and Pacific promoters, it is that our first proposition submitted to the Government was so moderate in their own interests and beneficial to this Province that the Government did not consider that anything fairer could be asked for. What were the terms ? That we might have the power to run the road for five years, which term might be extended for another five on a mutual agreement, and that the rates should be reasonable.
>
> Well, how were we to arrive at what were reasonable rates ? It was arranged that the Government should appoint one arbitrator, the railway men another, and if these two did not agree upon a third, they they should go to the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of

[1] *Memorandum*, J. J. Hill.

Canada to appoint him. This was the offer of those monopolists, of those who would grind us down. I ask you, could anything be more liberal?

In the course of the debate in Parliament on the Canadian Pacific Railway Act Amendment Bill,[1] in the spring of 1878, Mr. Smith disclosed some interesting particulars he had obtained of the transportation rates then charged by different companies in the North-West, to show that the heavy rates and great extortion complained of did not rest wholly with the Red River Transportation Company. These particulars he obtained from Mr. J. J. Hill, who wrote as follows:

St. Paul,
April 21, 1878.

I beg herewith to send you the particulars you ask for with regard to the transportation rates. The first-class passage from St. Paul to Winnipeg is $20. Of this amount the Northern Pacific will not accept anything less than $10, for carrying passengers 244 miles to Glyndon, which is made within twelve hours. From that point to Fisher's Landing, or rather Crookston, the other portion of the line belonging to the Red River Transportation Company, a distance of seventy miles, $2.50 is charged. There remains the transit by the Red River Transportation Company, for a distance of 380 miles, occupying two or three days, on the river, for which $7.50 is charged. Thus transportation over 244 miles the Northern Pacific obtains $10, that for seventy miles $2.50 was exacted, and that for 380 miles, extending over two or three days, only $7.50 is paid. For second-class passage $12 is paid for the whole distance, of which $6 was taken by the Northern Pacific for 244 miles, while the Red River Transportation Company obtains an amount in the same proportion as I have given for the first-class passengers. So much for the so-called "extortion" of the Red River Transportation Company.

On August 3rd, 1878, a lease was granted to Mr. Stephen, giving to the St. Paul and Pacific Railway running powers for ten years on the Pembina branch.

Mr. Stephen had gone west in the summer of 1878, and travelled up the railway to Fisher's Landing and along the

[1] To lease the Pembina branch.

St. Vincent extension, and on his return to Montreal wired Mr. Smith a dispatch expressing confidence that a train would be in Winnipeg in October. By means of the St. Paul, Minnesota and Manitoba Railway the entire North-West, both in Canada and the United States, became opened up to settlement and successful agriculture; and "those who initiated the enterprise and carried it forward were rewarded with a share of the prosperity of the country which their efforts changed from an unoccupied prairie to a region of happy homes and prosperous cities and towns."[1]

It is hardly within the prescribed scope of these pages to do more than refer to certain vexatious litigation which attended the transfer of the interests of the St. Paul and Pacific Railroad Company to Mr. Smith and his associates. But, since the transaction has been the subject of much gross misconception, a summary of it may not be considered here out of place.

When, in 1873, the railway went into bankruptcy, one James J. Farley, a person with an indifferent reputation, was appointed official receiver. The interests of the Dutch bondholders were in the hands of Mr. J. S. Kennedy, of New York. In order to obtain financial control and rehabilitate the railway, it was necessary to deal with Farley. Farley claimed to have knowledge not possessed by any of the other parties as to the whereabouts of the bonds, the rated value thereof by holders, and the mode whereby these could be procured; "also in respect to the situation, amount, character and value of the lines of railroad and property mortgaged to secure said bonds, and in respect to the pending suits for the foreclosure of said mortgages, and that the services of the plaintiff in respect to all of said matters and his co-operation were indispensable to the success of said enterprise."[2]

He gave this information to Messrs. Kittson and Hill in

[1] Sir William Van Horne.

[2] The plaintiff's plea in the subsequent lawsuit.

the first instance, and claimed to have entered into a secret agreement with them to share certain profits to be derived. "Thereupon Kittson made arrangements with, and procured, Donald A. Smith, in conjunction with George Stephen, to agree to furnish and advance funds necessary to purchase the bonds and carry out said enterprise, and as plaintiff is informed and believed, the said defendant Kittson, by and with the consent of the defendant Hill, but without the knowledge or consent of the plaintiff, and in violation of the understanding and agreement beforementioned, agreed with Smith and Stephen that the latter should have and hold for their own use and benefit three-fifths, or 60 per cent., interest in said undertaking and enterprise. Subsequent, Smith and Stephen, aided by Hill, Kittson and plaintiff, opened a court of negotiations (between 1877 and 1879) for the purchase of said bonds, and as a result of such negotiations Smith and Stephen purchased about $20,000,000 in amount of the bonds."[1]

In the legal proceedings it was indignantly denied by Kennedy that either he or the holders of any of the mortgaged bonds knew of Farley's interest in the project for purchasing the bonds. Nor did Kennedy even suspect at any time that Farley ever claimed to have any such interest, as receiver of the railway, then covered by a $15,000,000 mortgage. Moreover, how could Farley lawfully make any such agreement, or engage in the enterprise of purchasing the bonds? The mere making of such an agreement, and the embarking in such an enterprise by him, would have been a breach of trust on his part, and a fraud on the holders of the bonds.

But, while privately stigmatising Farley's charge of conspiracy, the St. Paul, Minneapolis and Manitoba Railway Company (as it was now) were strongly urged by counsel, as the speedier method of disposing of the case, to ignore the issue raised altogether, and simply to put forward

[1] *Minnesota Reports*, Vol. XXVII.

the plea that, by reason of the fiduciary position occupied by the plaintiff, the latter was not entitled to the aid of a court of equity to enforce any of the agreements mentioned in the bill or any of the rights claimed by him.

Therefore these defendants do plead whether they should be compelled to make further answer to the said bill, and pray to be hence dismissed, with their reasonable costs and charges in this behalf most wrongfully sustained.

In rendering his decision the Federal Judge treated Farley's plea with the severity it deserved.

"This is a strange demand to present to a court of equity," he said. . . . "Surely no principle of equity, morals or law could countenance such a demand, and no court worthy of its trust would lend its aid to further a scheme so abhorrent to all recognised rules of right and justice."[1]

The plea of the defendants was sustained, and the suit against them dismissed with costs.

The whole case aroused widespread interest, and an attempt was made in some quarters to create another "railway scandal" of a too-familiar type out of Farley's evidence. But, weighing well the charges as presented in court, no possible doubt could exist that the promoters of the railway had acted throughout as honourable men, and that the wicked plans of a blackmailer had happily miscarried.

The determination of the Dominion Government that the main line of the Canadian Pacific Railway was not to pass through Winnipeg continued to be a source of general dissatisfaction. But Mr. Smith was not discouraged, and it soon appeared that the Mackenzie Government was weakening on the question of the route north of Winnipeg.

The Prime Minister (Mr. Mackenzie) stated that the principal reason for carrying the railway from Red River

[1] *Federal Reports*, Vol. XIV.

north of Lake Manitoba to Fort Pelly was to shorten the distance to the destined capital of the North-West. Then declared Mr. Smith :

> I hope, now that the seat of Government for the North-West Territory is to be removed to a point some three hundred miles west and somewhat south of that first proposed, the Prime Minister will see his way to consider the location of this portion of the line so as to bring it south of Lake Manitoba, an alteration which would confer a very great benefit on the Province of Manitoba, and would command the approval and hearty thanks of its people. I believe that the statement and explanation of the Premier will give general satisfaction.

Before his heart had been wrapped up in the St. Paul and Pacific Mr. Smith had been seriously disquieted by the shilly-shallying in its railway policy of the Mackenzie Government.

" I am beginning to lose heart over the Canadian Pacific Railway," he said in 1876, " and to attach less and less importance to it as a means of saving the situation at large." A year later he declared :

" In so far as the facilities given for bringing in the supplies and sending out their products is concerned, it matters little how the people of Manitoba get it, so long as they get it."

How characteristic of him it was that, up to the debate of 1878, he had not considered it either desirable or necessary to confirm or deny the reports concerning his personal connection with the St. Paul and Minnesota Railway![1] His reason for silence was to avoid bringing down upon his head the very charges of illicit interest and political corruption which Sir John Macdonald, then leader of the Opposition, launched at him, and from which he vigorously defended himself.

[1] The *St. Paul Pioneer Press* first stated editorially on March 7th, 1878, that the purchasers of the bonds of the St. Paul and Pacific Railway were Messrs. Hill and Kittson, associated with Mr. Stephen, of the Bank of Montreal, and Donald A. Smith. It asserted that through the influence of the latter the support and co-operation of the Dominion Government had been obtained in the adjustment of their connections with the railway system in Manitoba.

"The honourable gentleman," observed Sir John hotly, "admitted he was partner in this concern, and the House should know something about it."

"I beg the right honourable gentleman's pardon," replied Mr. Smith, "I admitted no such thing. The honourable gentleman, I hope, is not my father confessor."

"The honourable gentleman," retorted the leader of the Opposition, "has not denied it, and there is no doubt that if he could have done so he would. A little while ago he denied positively that he had any interest in the Kittson line, because he could say so. But he does not deny that he has an interest in the St. Paul line."

To this Mr. Smith rejoined that it was neither necessary nor desirable for him to satisfy other people's curiosity. He said:

Whatever I have done in this respect I have done in the most open manner possible. When it was found that others could do nothing in the way of getting better railway facilities and completing the railway connections in Manitoba, I certainly, as a member from the Province, did my utmost to effect that. As I said on another occasion in this House, for two or three years back I have laboured earnestly to that end in connection with some friends, and no sooner did it become possible to get that which was so much required—indeed, an absolute necessity for the country—than the hon. gentleman and his friends put every obstacle in the way of its being carried out. He comes to this House and says that the Government is actuated by unworthy motives in proposing to make running arrangements with the St. Paul and Pacific Company over the Pembina branch, and that it is their intention to reward me in this way for my servile adherence to them.

Now I should like to ask the hon. gentleman for Kingston (Sir John Macdonald), and any member of his Government, if on any occasion they found a disposition on my part to ask or receive any favour from the Government either for myself or for that corporation which has been so much spoken of, and which I have had the honour of representing—the Hudson's Bay Company. I would ask the hon. member if I have received one sixpence of public money or one place, either for myself or for any other person connected with me, and if at this moment there is one single person related to myself who receives one sixpence of the public money?

There could be but one answer to this question. Throughout his polical career Donald A. Smith never asked for either place or favour. As a member of Parliament he drew no salary. As a Government Commissioner he accepted neither salary nor indemnity, even paying his own expenses. When, in the course of time, he became Canada's representative abroad, he forwent the emolument of that office.

One passes hastily over the conclusion of this debate in Parliament, as one draws a veil over features dear to us, but so distorted as to provoke in the spectator a sentiment of pain. A scene occurred—" the most disgraceful," wrote George Brown, " in the annals of the Canadian House of Commons "—when Sir John Macdonald lost his temper and, together with his lieutenant, Sir Charles Tupper, indulged in vituperative language for which he was afterwards sincerely ashamed. Physical violence on both sides was narrowly prevented. In such manner was the session of 1878 brought to an undignified, if dramatic, close.[1]

In the succeeding election Mr. Smith was again a candidate for Selkirk. On the hustings he disclaimed the title of " Mackenzieite " which his opponent foisted upon him. He denied that he had ever been a slavish supporter of either the present or the previous Administration. Throughout his Parliamentary career he had been absolutely independent, and had never received a personal favour from either the present or previous Government to the extent of one single dollar.

The Mackenzie Government did not receive at the polls throughout the Dominion the support expected. At a meeting the evening previous to the polling, Mr. Smith informed the electors that he had given an independent support to Mr. Mackenzie's Government, and he would consider it his bounden duty, when elected, to sustain any Government in passing such measures as were in the interests of the people of Manitoba and the North-West. All measures introduced

[1] *See* Appendix D.

into Parliament with that end in view he would sustain and advance to the best of his ability. One reason above all others, he said, had brought about the downfall of the Mackenzie Government—the idea which had got into the minds of many people of the country and, indeed, had been industriously instilled into them, that the great and widespread depression prevailing was the fault of the Government. He ventured, however, to express his belief that the Government in question was quite able to stand by its record; it, at any rate, had always sought to advance the welfare of the country at large.

The election resulted in Mr. Smith's favour, but the Opposition charged that a technical violation of the law had been committed, and demanded an annulment. In the course of lengthy inquiry it was shown that refreshments had unwittingly been served to visitors at "Silver Heights,"[1] and other malpractices indulged in, which, though innocent in themselves, might conceivably influence an individual's vote. But that any bribery or corruption, open or secret, could be alleged against the successful candidate was shown to be unjust and unreasonable. The case came before one Judge Bétournay, who, after carefully hearing the evidence, dismissed the charges.

Unhappily, this same judge, though universally respected, was, like most Canadian judges, poor, and had some years before sought to obtain a mortgage upon his property. The property was worth some $8,000 or $10,000. He had applied to Mr. Smith's agent in Winnipeg, who had advanced him $4,000 on a mortgage. Mr. Smith afterwards publicly stated that his agent had acted in this case, as in every other with which he had been connected in Manitoba, simply as his agent to invest money, and in most cases he himself did not know the parties dealt with or sums handled.

Yet when the circumstance of the mortgage was re-

[1] Mr. Smith's residence.

vealed, as a newspaper sensation, such a clamour arose that in May, 1879, Mr. Smith felt it was his duty to make a personal explanation by saying that, much as he disliked bringing personal matters before the House, and although he cared little for what the Press might say against him, he felt it his duty to speak if only to vindicate the character of the judge upon whom reflections had been cast.

Nevertheless, the matter was unscrupulously pressed by Mr. Smith's opponents, and on the contested election being argued before the Supreme Court, the decision was reversed and a new election ordered.

At first Mr. Smith decided not to offer himself for re-election. Afterwards, however, he yielded to the earnest representations of his many friends of both political parties, and consented again to become a candidate. But, as was inevitable, the result went against him, so great was the popularity of Sir John Macdonald and so zealous his friends to humiliate one who had had the misfortune to incur his displeasure.

Mr. Smith was beaten by one Captain Scott, who had a majority of 158 votes.

In the Parliamentary session of 1880 a great stir was attempted in respect of Mr. Smith's connection with "an American railway which," it was alleged, "was keeping British immigrants out of the North-West by advertising the superior attractions of the lands belonging to that railway." Mr. Smith wrote:

> I am really disturbed about this, especially after incurring the serious displeasure of one or two of my fellow-directors that I was not sufficiently eager to sell our Minnesota lands.

To the House of Commons he said:

> It is true that I have an interest in the St. Paul, Minneapolis and Manitoba Railway, perhaps three million acres of the lands in Minnesota. But I hope that does not make me less a Canadian than I would be otherwise. I have been in this country now for upwards of forty years, and can therefore claim to be as much a Canadian

as most of the hon. gentlemen in this House. I regret that the hon. member for Montreal West is not in his place in the House, because I can recollect when he and the Hon. Peter Mitchell—who wrote these very pleasing and interesting letters which have engaged the attention of hon. gentlemen, and in which he speaks in high terms of the lands in Minnesota—heard other testimony.

I can recollect five members of this House and myself were on the train between Winnipeg and St. Paul together, on our return from Manitoba. We met the emigration agent of the Dominion Government, and that official, whom I then saw for the first time, on being asked, " Are any efforts made by the officials of the St. Paul, Minneapolis and Manitoba Railway to keep back emigrants on their way to Manitoba ? " replied, " Certainly not ; on the contrary, every possible assistance and facilities are afforded these emigrants for going through to their destination."

Perhaps some other American railway companies acted differently, but that has nothing to do with the road referred to.

. . . Our instructions to our officials are that no attempt should be made to keep back these people on their way to Manitoba, but, on the contrary, to aid and assist them as far as possible, and I believe that these instructions are honestly carried out. The settlers, both on the Government and railway lands along the St. Paul and Manitoba Road, are principally farmers from Wisconsin, Illinois, Michigan, and other Eastern States, who, having sold their farms there at good prices, take up wheat lands in Minnesota, and each, in possession of capital ranging from $1,000 to perhaps $50,000, contributes immediately to building up the country. These are Americans, who naturally prefer their own institutions to ours, and so remain under their own Government ; and hon. gentlemen must be aware that the great majority of Canadians proceeding beyond St. Paul, who do not go to and remain in Manitoba, become settlers in the territory of Dakota, and not on the lands of the St. Paul and Manitoba Company.

No one can say that I have ever put forward the claims of the United States for emigration in preference to Manitoba and the North-West Territory. Quite otherwise ; and when recently in England, on the question of resources and development of Canada being brought forward at a meeting of the Royal Colonial Institute, I took occasion there to speak in the most marked terms of the advantage Canada had over the United States in this respect, and in this superiority I firmly and faithfully believe.

CHAPTER XVIII

THE CANADIAN PACIFIC RAILWAY SYNDICATE (1880-86)

IT is unquestionable that, despite those amiable traits which won him countless staunch personal friends, even among his political opponents, Sir John Macdonald rather inclined to inveteracy in his resentments. He frankly admitted as much himself. "When a man has done me an evil turn once," he avowed, "I don't like to give him the opportunity to do so twice."

He was wont to say he deplored this disposition to cherish a grudge, humorously attributing it to a Highland strain in his blood. He added, however: "I fight against it, and I believe I shall die at peace with my enemies."

For some years Sir John chose to believe that Mr. Smith had been guilty of treachery in failing to support him on a critical occasion in 1873. He refused to credit the purity of Mr. Smith's motives. To a friend who undertook to demonstrate that the member for Selkirk was still a loyal admirer of himself—although obliged on a question of public policy to vote against him—he declared: "I don't believe it. If he were loyal, he would not have deserted me."

But this was not the real Sir John Macdonald. A long career in politics, a familiarity with politicians and place-hunters, and many dealings with corrupt interests, had made him cynical; but it did not destroy his belief in private honour or public morality. He knew and—as years rolled on—he confessed the mistake he had made with regard to Mr. Smith. For a long time, however, his pride kept him silent.

On resuming power in 1878, Sir John's first care, after his cherished National Policy, which reversed the free

trade tendencies of his predecessor, was to carry out the great transcontinental railway project to which the country had long been pledged. Some tentative railway building in the west, undertaken by his Minister of Railways, Sir Charles Tupper, only confirmed him in his belief that the day for haphazard and piecemeal construction was over.

In 1879 Parliament placed at his disposal 1,000,000 acres of land, but he was not able with that grant to arrange for any complete scheme for the rapid construction of the railway. In 1880, the Ministers again met the House, and met it with the same policy of the year before, namely, to take up in good faith the obligations that devolved upon them through the acts of their predecessors. Although they had not formulated the plan of carrying on the work by the Government, they took up the work as they found it. But the method was exasperating and, considered as a means to an end, highly unsatisfactory. It was now clear that private capitalists must be found who would take the whole burden off the shoulders of the Government. Were there any such ? It soon appeared that there were : to some sanguine spirits, at any rate, the great scheme was infinitely more attractive in 1880 than it had been two years before.

In June, 1880, Sir John told his followers assembled at a political rally :

> I can say this, and the Minister of Finance, who is on the platform, can corroborate my statement, if necessary, that there are capitalists at this moment, who, knowing that there is a certain fortune to be made out of the construction of the railway, are asking that the work be handed over to them. They have said, " We will relieve you of all anxiety, and the people of all apprehension of being taxed. We will take the railway in hand, build it, and make fortunes out of it." The Government at this moment has the offers so made under consideration, so that there is no danger regarding the road.

It will be recalled that at the exciting close of the memorable session of 1878 Sir John had twitted Mr. Donald Smith with being closely concerned with the St. Paul and

Pacific Railway, and that Mr. Smith had refused to give him any information on this point. Albeit, the facts soon became common property, and Sir John, in consequence, was averse from any negotiations in which the member for Selkirk might be a party. Moreover, the untoward events of 1873, which had hurled him from power, induced him to tread cautiously the devious ways of railway finance.

In the summer of 1880 he paid a visit to England. He subsequently explained that before he went there was a provisional offer made to the Government, which was distinctly understood to be provisional. He said :

We subsequently received a second offer, and the Government came to the conclusion, especially as we had an indirect intimation, verbally, that an offer would probably be made from New York and San Francisco, that we could not possibly settle the matter here. We decided to inform all the parties that we would attend to the reception of any applications, tenders or offers, in London. Thereupon, the first party who made this provisional offer withdrew it and would not hold to it. The second party did not do so—this was an offer from England, and the party subsequently dropped their application.

The communications that were made in England were principally, if not altogther, verbal. Gentlemen came over again and again from Paris and sat with us to the discussion of these matters. The first offer was withdrawn. The second one it would be unfair to disclose ; as the hon. gentleman opposite will see there were persons in it, bankers and others of considerable commercial standing, who were connected with that offer. They found that they were not strong enough to press it. Their offer was made, of course, with the desire of coming in if they could, and being engaged in the construction of the road, and it would be hardly fair to them to use their names and to state that these persons failed in being strong enough to undertake the work.

It would affect their position. The present offer is the most favourable offer, both as to money and land, that the Government or delegates received. Arrangements were made ; we sat *de die in diem* as a little committee, meeting different gentlemen again and again. They were all desirous of making an arrangement, money being plentiful and enterprise ripe on the continent of Europe, especially in France and England. They were all anxious to connect themselves with such an enterprise. Some were appalled by the largeness of the scheme ;

some were frightened by the eventual responsibility, and one after another withdrew from attempts to be concerned with the railway. As to the present parties, we met them every day.

Sir John and his colleagues were honestly desirous of having, if possible, Canadians and Canadian capital to undertake and conclude this great national project, which had for years been hanging fire.

Sir John asked :

Would Canada be likely to have this contract carried out with the success we all desire, expect, and hope for, if we had made the contract with the strongest body of capitalists that could be found in the City of London ? What should we have had ? We should have had, the first thing, an English engineer, with extravagant ideas, totally ignorant of the work and the construction of railways through such a country, and we should have had, at no distant day—no matter what their resources might be—a perfect failure in their hands ; and, worse than that, we should have had discredit brought upon the country in consequence of the parties which had purchased the bonds failing to obtain that interest which they justly expected from their investment.

On Sir John's return from England there were various conferences with the financiers thus mysteriously alluded to. As the result of these negotiations a syndicate now openly submitted the terms upon which it was prepared to build the Canadian Pacific Railway. In that syndicate the name of Donald A. Smith did not appear. Nominally, its head was Mr. George Stephen, of Montreal ; it was he who made the formal overtures to the Government.

Mr. Smith wrote to Mr. Stephen on January 9th, 1881 :

I must not, and do not, complain of Sir John Macdonald's prejudice against me, which I trust time will tend to abate ; but I shall not the less on that account exert myself to the utmost consistent with the conditions which that prejudice imposes.

On December 1st, 1880, it was announced that a provisional contract had been made with a syndicate composed of George Stephen and Duncan McIntyre, of Montreal ; John S. Kennedy, of New York, banker ; Morton Rose and Co., of London, England, merchants ; Kohn, Reinach and

Co., Paris, bankers; and Richard B. Angus and J. J. Hill, of St. Paul, who were subsequently incorporated as the Canadian Pacific Railway Company.

Briefly, the syndicate agreed to finish the railway through from Montreal to the Pacific, and operate it for ten years, in consideration of a cash grant of $25,000,000, a land grant of 25,000,000 acres, and the portion of the railway already completed upon which the Government had expended, in round figures, $28,000,000. The terms had only to be made known for a howl of execration to go up from the Opposition. It was roundly declared that the country had been sold. The bargain was denounced as unconscionable robbery on the one hand, and perfidious acquiescence on the other. One member pointed out that the eminent engineer, Mr. Sanford Fleming, had estimated that the cost of constructing the remaining 2,000 miles would be $48,500,000. He said:

To induce the syndicate to undertake this portion of the road we agree to give them $25,000,000 in cash, and 25,000,000 acres of land valued at $50,000,000. By this cash and land grant we pay the syndicate the entire cost of building their portion of the road and $26,500,000 additional! The syndicate have, therefore, a profit on the building of their portion of the road of $26,500,000. We will then assume that the entire road is finished. What does the Government do then?

It hands to the syndicate the portion built by the latter, and on which the syndicate has already made a profit of $26,500,000 by building. It hands over also the entire road built by the Government. The syndicate get $26,500,000, and they get the entire Pacific Railway, estimated to cost in the neighbourhood of $80,000,000, a total of $106,500,000; and they get this on condition that they will be good enough to accept it and deposit $1,000,000 as security for running the road. But the Government does not stop there. The road and its equipment and the capital stock of the Company are forever exempted from taxation.

According to the Toronto *Globe:*

Under the bargain as it stands, it would appear that the Company might shut up the unproductive parts of the road while still retaining

the sections which still paid a profit. But, supposing the Government could force them to relinquish the whole line in case of default, the syndicate would care little for the surrender of five millions of large bonds, if they had made twenty-six millions five-hundred thousand dollars and were able to escape the task of operating the road north of Lake Superior through the "sea of mountains" of British Columbia.

It is a fact that under this bargain the syndicate may go on to build the road, raising all the money needed for the work of construction and over twenty millions besides, and after their work is done, at the end of the ten years, coolly decide whether it will be most to their advantage to run the road or to throw it on the shoulders of the people of Canada. The net result of the whole scheme is that the Government is to pay seventy-five millions for the construction of part of a road which will cost forty-eight and a half millions; and if, at the end of ten years, money is to be made by running the road, the Government will be free from further exactions, and the Company will be placed in full possession of a line which will have cost $80,000,000 to build, and for which they will have received at least $110,000,000, but if the road will not pay, an unknown, but certainly large, sum will be called for to provide the materials for a traffic large enough to be remunerative, and a further amount to pay working expenses.

Another objection was that the $26,000,000 might be spent to no purpose. There was no security except the reputation of the members of the Company that the railway might not be "thrown back on the hands of the country again."

It would be tedious to recount the arguments used on platforms and by the Press against a ratification of the Government's bargain with Mr. Stephen and his associates. The tumult was all in vain: the bargain was formally ratified early in 1881. The Canadian Pacific Company was incorporated and one of the most stupendous undertakings in history began.

Of the little band of men who had accepted the task, it can now be said with certainty that, as Donald Smith said, they were never, from the first to the last day of those memorable five years, animated by any mere spirit of gain. Speaking on May 26th, 1887, Mr. Smith said:

A Stupendous Undertaking

The First Minister will bear me out when I say that Sir George Stephen and the other members of the syndicate did not approach the Government with regard to the building of the Canadian Pacific Railway until the Government had tried in Europe, and elsewhere, to get others to take it up, capable of carrying it through, but had not succeeded in this.

I say distinctly that the gentlemen who undertook the charter, although at first unwilling to assume the responsibility, ultimately consented, more with a view of assisting to open up the country than from any expectation of gain to be derived from it.[1]

By the terms of the contract the line was to be finished in 1891. The policy agreed upon by President Stephen and his fellow-directors in building the line was to press forward construction so that, if possible, the line could be completed in five instead of the stipulated ten years. Contracts were given out, and in a few weeks thousands of workmen were straining every muscle to carry out the work. Meanwhile, the existing road had to be operated, and a population induced to take up lands in the sections through which it ran. The expenses were enormous. Millions disappeared as into the maw of a vast monster, and more millions had to be found. Every economy was practised, save that which would affect the soundness and stability of the work.

The Chief Engineer of the Government, Mr. Collingwood Schreiber, C.B., who had succeeded Mr. Fleming, in his report of September, 1883, stated :

It affords me much pleasure to be able to state that the Pacific Railway Company are doing their work in a manner which leaves nothing to be desired. . . . The work . . . up to the present time has been performed most faithfully, and in a manner fully up to the requirements of the contract.

By this time the practical management of the Company had devolved into highly capable hands. Even before it had become certain that the arrangement would be con-

[1] *Parliamentary Debates.*

cluded, the leaders of the syndicate had discussed the question of the official *personnel* of the Canadian Pacific Railway. To Mr. Hill there was then known Mr. William Cornelius Van Horne, the General Superintendent of the Chicago, Milwaukee and St. Paul Railway. This official, still in his "thirties," was notable even amongst the many notable figures which the vast system of American transportation had called into being. He was the scion of Dutch stock long settled in New York, and, in the words of Mr. Hill, "there was no one on the whole continent who would have served their purpose so well as Mr. Van Horne. He had brains, skill, experience and energy, and was besides a born leader of men."

The provision of a three per cent. dividend for the holders of the $65,000,000 of shares was arranged in the summer of 1883. It amounted to a purchase of an annuity of three per cent. on these shares for ten years, based on the deposit of cash and securities with the Government by the Company, which would, by actuarial calculation, at four per cent. yield in ten years the amount required.

This arrangement had hardly been completed and the deposit made when the failure of the Northern Pacific Railway in the autumn of 1883 brought about a financial crash which defeated the object of the arrangement and resulted in the locking-up of all the cash and valuable resources of the Company beyond recall. The situation was a desperate one, and was the cause of the visit of Mr. Stephen and some of the directors, and Mr. J. J. C. Abbott, to Ottawa. The party went directly to "Earnscliffe" to lay the matter before Sir John Macdonald, and to point out the absolute necessity of immediate Government assistance, and he was asked to make a loan to the Company of $30,000,000, to be paid over as the work advanced, and to be secured by a first lien on all the properties of the Company. Sir John replied that it was absolutely impossible—that nothing of the kind could be

done. He was obdurate, and Mr. Stephen and his friends had to leave empty-handed and in despair. They proceeded to John Henry Pope's quarters in the "Bank Cottage," and told him all that had occurred. Mr. Pope apparently saw that the fate of the Conservative party was involved in the matter, and, although it was past midnight, he proceeded at once to "Earnscliffe," asking Stephen and his party to await his return. When he came back, about two o'clock in the morning, he merely said: "Well, he will do it."

The first application to the Government for money to carry on the work was favourably considered. On October 24th, 1883, Mr. Stephen wrote to Sir Charles Tupper thus:

The capital stock of this Company has been fixed at $100,000,000, of which $55,000,000 have already been issued.

It now requires a further amount of money to enable it to prosecute the work of construction and equipment at the same rate of progress as heretofore, and, in accordance with its policy, and in justice to its present shareholders, such amount should be obtained by means of the remaining stock of the Company.

But in the present state of the market and of public feeling as to stocks generally, it would be impossible to dispose in the ordinary way of any further amount of stock at a reasonable rate, if at all, and the Company is desirous of adopting the following plan as a mode of procuring the amount required:—

The Company to deposit with the Government money and securities constituting a fund sufficient to pay semi-annual dividends for ten years on the entire stock of the Company, at the rate of 3 per cent. per annum. The amount required for this purpose has been ascertained to be $24,527,145.

This project would require the assistance of the Government, but merely as a depositary of the fund to be created, and it would impose no responsibility or liability upon the Government beyond the periodical repayment of instalments of the amount deposited, with interest added at the rate mentioned.

I have, therefore, to request the favour of the co-operation of the Government in carrying out the suggested plan, and as I purpose leaving for England shortly, I should be greatly obliged if this matter could be disposed of at an early date.

Regarding this, Mr. Collingwood Schreiber, the Government's Engineer, wrote to the Ministry:

> This proposition commends itself favourably to me, and as the Government would, in my opinion, incur no risk in entertaining it, I beg to recommend its adoption.

In a further letter of November 6th Mr. Stephen proposed a modification of the foregoing arrangement, namely, that the payment of three per cent. for ten years be on a sum of $65,000,000 of stock only, inasmuch as the Company only proposed to dispose of the stock, from time to time, in such amounts as might be necessary to meet the demands of construction.

The Company offered to deposit the remaining $35,000,000 of stock with the Government, interest at three per cent. to be paid on such part thereof as from time to time might be paid to the Government. The Company asked that, in carrying this arrangement into effect, the deposit representing three per cent. for ten years on $100,000,000 be reduced to such a sum as would leave sufficient security in the hands of the Government to pay the three per cent. for ten years on $65,000,000.

Two or three years before, Sir Sanford Fleming had stated it as his opinion that "a continuous road from Lake Nipissing to the Pacific Ocean through Canadian territory would pay running expenses when three million people had settled in the North-West."

As a matter of fact, and happily for itself, the Canadian Pacific Railway, thanks to the astonishing skill of its management, paid its running expenses almost from the beginning.

But this was not then the problem. Still were millions of dollars needed for construction. The hour momentarily threatened to strike when the millions were no longer forthcoming. For a time it seemed as if the daily demands could not be met, and the road was doomed to failure and the

Company to bankruptcy. Looking back on this phase now, it seems almost incredible that it should have been so. But the opinion of contemporaries upon the railway was not that universally entertained to-day. There were many who were ready to condole with Messrs. Stephen and Smith for their hardihood. There were many who freely predicted disaster, because they had embarked their own and others' millions in an enterprise which would not be able to return a profit until they had been many years in their graves.

The demands must be met—money must be procured—and consequently the Company were driven again to apply to Parliament for a loan. It was the signal for another explosion from the Opposition. What had become of the money already advanced by the Government? Where was the product of the sales of land and land bonds? There must be something wrong somewhere. If it were not corruption, it must be prodigality.

The Deputy-Minister of Inland Revenue was asked by the Government to go to Montreal in company with Mr. Schreiber, the Chief Engineer, for the purpose of making such investigation of the books and statements of the Company as would assure beyond all question the accuracy of its statements of expenditure.

The two gentlemen went; they examined the books, and thus reported:

> As the result of our investigations, we have no hesitation whatever in submitting our opinion that the statements furnished by the President and placed in our hands for verification, represent truthfully the actual condition of the Company's affairs as portrayed by the books of the Company.

It soon appeared that ulterior causes were at work to damage the credit of the Company. Combinations were formed against the Canadian Pacific Railway by interested roads; the Grand Trunk Railway Company and certain American rivals strove to obstruct its progress; and the

result of their combinations and machinations was to prevent the Canadian Pacific Railway Company from disposing of its stock at a fair market value—at any rate, at such value as they had fair reason to expect so to realise in order to apply the proceeds to the completion of their great work. But this was not all.

A great depreciation had taken place in the value of American railway securities, not merely in the New York market, but also in the other great money markets of the world; and this depreciation occurred at the very time when the Canadian Pacific Railway needed the proceeds which they expected to obtain from the sale of their stock.

Mr. Donald Smith and his colleagues bore the criticism and abuse directed towards them, patiently, and sometimes with humour. In a long and heated debate—one of the longest and most acrimonious in the history of the Canadian Parliament—the railway was attacked, its good faith was called in question. It was charged with gross extravagance and unnecessary waste of funds. In the opinion of the Opposition there was no excuse or reason to explain why this Company should be compelled to come to the House seeking help to bridge over its difficulties. Its resources were ample and abundant. It had millions upon millions in excess of the sum required to enable it to discharge the contract which it made with the Dominion of Canada. It had made its bed and, though it were Damiens' bed of steel, it must lie on it.

Naturally, the Opposition did not scruple to hint that the Government were receiving bribes from the Company. Why this secrecy? Why this indecent haste? There was something that Mr. Blake and the Opposition members did not understand.

But, of course, the real question was: Was the country receiving, and likely to continue to receive, value for the money it had pledged, and was the security adequate?

The reply of one member, Mr. Dawson (of Dawson Route fame), was conclusive :

> The security is ample and sufficient. That it is ample there can be no doubt. They offer to make over to the Government every mile of the railway, the rolling stock and everything they possess, and surely such ample security as that ought to be sufficient. But, Sir, there is a further security, which of itself is ample, and that is that not a dollar of this $22,500,000 is to be handed over to them except as the work proceeds. It will only be paid for work done. The money is not given to them to spend on any other project, but, as the engineer reports a certain amount of work done, this money is to be handed over. Surely that of itself is a security which ought to satisfy the House.

Ultimately the money was voted, and the Company were enabled to pay off the contractors and were granted a brief breathing spell. But it was very brief.

Mr. Van Horne, as an officer under orders, pushed forward unflinchingly with the work of construction. He did so because of his confidence in those over him. Messrs. Stephen and Smith were equally resolute; but the burden of responsibility was on them, and they were subject to passing tremors and fleeting misgivings of which few people, if any, in the outside world ever knew. Yet they never lost heart.

Once, in the days of doubt and darkness, when the fate of the Canadian Pacific Railway was trembling in the balance, there was a directors' meeting in Montreal, and the prospects of failure for lack of funds were long and painfully canvassed. At last the President brought down his palm forcibly upon the table and exclaimed :

" Gentleman, it looks as if we had to burst! "

Mr. Smith glanced deprecatingly at the speaker and, scratching the green baize cloth with his forefinger, said mildly :

" It may be that we must—*succumb,* but that must not be," he added, raising his voice, " as long as we individually have a dollar! "

In June, 1885, circumstances once again compelled them

to go before Parliament for a loan. This time their enemies were alert and numerous. It remained to be seen what was the strength of their friends. The Government had stood by them so far, but how much farther did it dare? The mood of the House was distinctly hostile, but cash—immediate cash—was vitally necessary, and the banks would grant no more.

Just then the attention of Parliament and the Ministry was absorbed elsewhere.

The mutterings of the Riel Rebellion were already heard, and the Government was full of anxiety. The loan to the Company could not be obtained, although an advance of one million dollars was paid, a mere drop in the bucket of the Company's indebtedness. The Government's guarantee of its bonds was not forthcoming. The opposition to the measure was at first rather fierce, but the very important assistance the Company was able to render the Government in the way of moving troops to the North-West for the suppression of the rebellion, while Parliament was yet in session, pulled the teeth of the Opposition and consolidated the Government's support. Nevertheless, the passage of the bill was long delayed because of the Franchise Bill, which preceded it, and which the Government insisted on giving priority. At the middle of July, 1885, it had not yet become law. In the meantime, the Company's obligations had been piling up, and its position had become extremely desperate.

It was accordingly necessary to face the crisis at once, and on July 13th, 1885, Stephen, accompanied by Mr. (afterwards Sir John) Abbott, the solicitor of the Company, travelled to Ottawa to learn the decision of Sir John Macdonald's Government. They went direct to the Council Chamber, where they were made aware by the hats hanging in the outer hall that a Ministerial Council was in session, and in the ante-room they awaited the momentous result. There were rows of books locked in the official bookcases,

and a few newspapers and bluebooks which they had not the heart to glance at. They had even no zest for conversation, but sat there, in the stifling heat of a July afternoon, patiently waiting for the door to open and the Ministers to file out. One hour passed thus—two—three. Within, all was wrapped in silence: surely the session of the Privy Council threatened to be interminable.

It was twilight when the secretary of the Council glanced into the ante-room.

"Are you waiting to see someone?" he asked in surprise.

"I am," replied Mr. Stephen. "We are waiting for the Privy Council to adjourn."

"For the Council to adjourn!" echoed the other. "Why, the meeting has been over these three hours!"

Instinctively the eyes of Stephen and Abbott looked out into the hall. The hats of the Ministers were gone. An odd look crept into their faces. They had grasped the situation.

Speechless and dispirited to the last degree, Stephen repaired to the Russell House. In the corridor he sank into a chair. A friend accosted him after a time, as he sat there, with his gaze fastened on the floor, and inquired how he felt.

"I feel," replied Stephen, "*like a ruined man!*"

That was the lowest ebb in a tide which afterwards flowed so high.

Largely through the friendly intervention of an influential Toronto supporter, Sir Frank Smith, the Government finally agreed to allow the issue of $35,000,000 of stock, of which it was to guarantee $20,000,000, leaving $15,000,000 to be issued by Mr. Stephen, Mr. Donald A. Smith, and their fellow-directors. Such a proposition was hardly tempting. The question was—would the great European bankers consider it favourably? It was agreed that Mr. Stephen should journey to London to interview

the Barings, of which famous banking firm Lord Revelstoke was the head. His surprise was great when, before he had completed his lengthy explanation of the situation, Lord Revelstoke interrupted him, saying :

" We have been looking into this question carefully, and, if agreeable to you, we are prepared to take over the whole issue of £3,000,000 of stock at ninety-one and three-quarters."

Mr. Stephen could hardly credit such good news. Nevertheless, he asked with admirable self-possession :

" How soon will the money be available ? "

Whereupon Lord Revelstoke explained that it would require some months to arrange the details of the issue. Meanwhile, they offered to issue their own certificates for £750,000 at once, and three further sums of £750,000 at intervals during the month.

The question of solvency of the Company was forever settled. Mr. Stephen instantly cabled the good news out to Canada.

There is a station of the great railway in the Canadian Rocky Mountains to-day which bears the name of Revelstoke. It commemorates an important event in the financial history of the road, for the head of the great English banking house of Baring Brothers was not the least of the factors in the advancement and consolidation of the fortunes of the Canadian Pacific Railway Company.

From that time forward no shadow of financial darkness obscured the bright prospects of the road. Not only were the Barings as good as their word, but they continued to negotiate all the issues of the Company until 1890. In that year, when they were approached for a fresh loan, they declined. The directors were astonished, but Lord Revelstoke said :

" The security is excellent, but we believe the time has come when the Canadian Pacific Railway Company ought to sell its own securities over its own counter. As for ourselves, we will make a liberal subscription."

When an explanation at length was forthcoming, the Canadian directors had reason to feel a profound gratitude. Even then the historic firm of Baring Brothers anticipated those financial difficulties in the Argentine Republic which were to end for them in utter disaster, and they were reluctant to involve the great Canadian railway in their fall.

At last, on November 7th, 1885, upwards of five years before the expiry of the time allowed by the terms of the contract, the railway was finished.

" If," it has been picturesquely written, " an inquisitive eagle, soaring above the lonely crags of the Rocky Mountains on November 7th, 1885, had looked down upon a certain spot near the Columbia River and about 350 miles from Vancouver, it would have seen a very unusual sight. A railway train had come to a standstill at this spot to allow a number of gentlemen to alight, and these, surrounded by a great concourse of working-men, had gathered together to see one among them perform an action apparently simple and uninteresting. At the side of one of the shining rails was an iron plate with a hole in it, and through this hole a spike had to be driven which would fasten it firmly to the wooden sleeper.

" Surely it was not necessary, you will say, for all these gentlemen to come from a distance to do what any one of the stalwart workmen could have done with the greatest ease! Ah, but it was a very special spike, the last of millions that had been driven in the course of constructing a railway which was to join the town of Montreal with the Pacific Ocean."

No bright flags waved in that lonely valley; there were no trumpets to sound a fanfare of triumph. Yet the consummation of a gigantic undertaking was being celebrated. As the vigorous blows from the hammer rang out, it did not seem an exaggeration to say that they echoed through the British Empire. As someone picturesquely wrote : " The shippers of Victoria, British Columbia, heard them and

knew that they meant an increase in the carriage of merchandise through their town to and from Japan, because the railway would lessen the distance between London and Yokohama by many hundreds of miles. The farmers of Manitoba, a thousand miles away, heard them, too, and knew that they meant a larger market for their corn and fruit; and farther away still, in the old Canadian cities, the merchants heard them and knew that commerce in the great western lands, hitherto unreached by railways, would grow more prosperous."

On the return journey of the party which had assisted at the foregoing interesting ceremony, Mr. Smith announced his intention of giving an entertainment in honour of the event at "Silver Heights." As this residence was several miles distant from Winnipeg, Mr. Van Horne had previously conceived the happy idea of giving Mr. Smith a surprise by having a short branch line constructed from there to the town. The work offered no great difficulty; there were a large number of light rails and sleepers, left over from the work, close at hand. He gave the necessary orders, and in a week or so it was completed.

"On the morning in question," wrote one who was present, "our train (containing the party, including Mr. Sanford Fleming) approached Winnipeg. We were all engaged in conversation, and Mr. Smith apparently did not notice that the engine driver had reversed the engine. At last he looked out of the window.

"'Why, we are backing up,' he said, and then: 'Now, there's a very neat place. I don't remember seeing that farm before. And those cattle—why, who is it that has Aberdeen cattle like that? I thought I was the only one. This is really very strange.' Suddenly the house came into view. 'Why, gentlemen, I must be going crazy; I've lived here many years and I never noticed another place so exactly like "Silver Heights."'

"'Silver Heights!' called the conductor. The car

LORD STRATHCONA DRIVING THE GOLDEN SPIKE TO COMMEMORATE THE COMPLETION OF THE C.P.R., ON NOVEMBER 7TH, 1885.

1 Sir W. Van Horne.
2 — Sandford Fleming.
3 Lord Strathcona.
4 D. H. McIntyre.

stopped, and some of us began to betray our enjoyment of the joke. After another glance outside he began to laugh, too. I never saw him so delighted."

Before nightfall a telegram arrived from the Queen, through the Governor-General, Lord Lansdowne, graciously congratulating the Canadian people on the national achievement, which Her Majesty was well advised in regarding as "of great importance to the whole British Empire."

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One evening in February, 1886, rumours of the Government's intentions with regard to the Grand Trunk Railway Company so alarmed the members of the syndicate that a meeting was held in Ottawa at the "Bank Cottage," then occupied by Hon. Mr. Pope. Some decisive step it was felt had to be taken, and Messrs. Stephen, Angus and Smith talked over the situation. Representations, it was decided, must be made, and made at once, to the Prime Minister.

Accompanied by only one other of his colleagues, Mr. Smith was duly ushered into Sir John's study. There was a small desk in one corner before which the Prime Minister, after greeting them rather coldly, seated himself. Mr. Smith recapitulated the situation. Then, rising, he began to approach the desk, facing Sir John.

"You see, Sir John, this thing cannot be. It must not be, Sir John. It must not, it really must not be." Raising his voice, he reached the desk and leaned over it, shaking an ominous forefinger, while the Prime Minister shrank back. "I tell you, Sir John, it *must not be!*"

Sir John's expression relaxed.

"Come, come, Mr. Smith," he said with a smile. "I never said it would, could, or should be. Pray sit down."

He then explained that the Government had no intention of giving the proposed advantage to the rival road; then, having furnished the fullest assurances on this head, he shook hands with his visitors and accompanied them, in the "wee sma' hours," to the door.

On June 28th, 1886, the first through train over the completed Pacific Railway left Dalhousie Square Station, Montreal, on its long pilgrimage of 2,905 miles through the meadows, primeval wilderness, fertile prairies, and the lofty mountains of the broad Dominion to Port Moody on the western coast. The event was too important for the city of Montreal for her citizens to permit it to go unnoticed. At eight o'clock on this summer night the ten cars and engine, which comprised the first through train, started on this journey amidst loud cheers and the booming of the guns of the field battery, which fired a parting salute as the train glided from the densely thronged station.

The departure of this train marked the consummation of that union of the British Dominions on the continent which was inaugurated on July 1st, 1867, and is second only in importance to the confederation of the four provinces which that day joined their interests and fate in a bond not to be dissolved while Great Britain maintains her supremacy over the northern portion of the New World.

The Marquis of Lorne—heir to the Duke of Argyll and husband of Princess Louise—thus wrote to the promoters :

> The Queen has been most deeply interested in the account which I have given her of the building of your great railway, the difficulties which it involved and which have been so wonderfully surmounted. Not one Englishman in a thousand realises what those difficulties were ; but now that the great Dominion has been penetrated by this indestructible artery of steel, the thoughts and purposes of her people, as well as her commerce, will flow in an increasing current to and fro, sending a healthful glow to all the members. The Princess and I are looking forward to a journey one day to the far and fair Pacific.

Already the Queen had signified her sense of the great Imperial service rendered by the promoters of the railway. Upon the President was bestowed the dignity of a baronetcy, and on May 26th, 1886, Mr. Smith was nominated a Knight Commander of the Order of St. Michael and St. George.

Sir George Stephen was the actual head of the under-

taking; no one could wish to minimise the part he had played. At the same time, few tributes paid to Sir Donald Smith were more just, and, it may be added, more gratifying to the man whose prescience foresaw, and whose strong hand educed and promoted this great national project, than that uttered by Sir Charles Tupper in 1897:

The Canadian Pacific Railway would have no existence to-day, notwithstanding all that the Government did to support that undertaking, had it not been for the indomitable pluck and energy and determination, both financially and in every other respect, of Sir Donald Smith.

Amongst those snow-capped mountains two lofty summits bear the names of these two Morayshire kinsmen. As long as the earth's surface remains unaltered and our language and traditions survive, Mount Stephen on the one hand, and Mount Sir Donald on the other, will rear their heights heavenward to commemorate one of the greatest achievements of patriotism and industry and engineering since the days of the Roman Cæsars.

CHAPTER XIX

THE MANITOBA SCHOOL QUESTION (1886–96)

IN the meanwhile the long-wished-for reconciliation with Sir John Macdonald had been brought about in the simplest and most natural manner. Mr. George Stephen, calling upon Sir John at his hotel in London, was accompanied by Mr. Smith. The visit was unpremeditated. They shook hands cordially; there was no embarrassment, no allusion, tacit or overt, to what had passed—the conversation was pursued as naturally as if they had met but yesterday, and a schism had not yawned between them for more than a decade.

The healing of the breach between the two statesmen was complete; and I have the high authority of Sir Joseph Pope for stating that never thereafter, in public or private, by word, look or gesture, did Sir John reveal any but the frankest and most unclouded cordiality for the former member for Selkirk.

For five years Sir Donald had ceased to be a member of Parliament. His prestige throughout the country, following the triumphant completion of the Canadian Pacific Railway and his reconciliation with Sir John Macdonald, made it highly probable that before the next general election he would be offered a nomination in some constituency. Winnipeg was not long in expressing a desire for his services. A deputation from that city waited upon him in Montreal towards the close of 1886, and besought him in the most flattering terms to become the candidate.

He replied that, though fully alive to the compliment, he was not eager to return to political life; the matter, he said, required consideration.

The Criterion of Success

Mr. James A. Cantlie, one of the most respected citizens of Montreal and brother-in-law to Lord Mount Stephen, then observed :

" If you really again contemplate Parliament, why go so far afield as Winnipeg for a seat ? There will shortly be a vacancy in Montreal West—I can assure you of a triumphant return."

No decision had been reached when Sir Donald left for England, but it scarcely came as a surprise when in London at the close of 1886 a cablegram reached him from the chairman of the local Conservative Association, advising him of his nomination. He instantly replied :

I appreciate the honour of nomination and accept it, if electors are satisfied with my assurance that, as an independent member, uninfluenced by any other considerations than those having in view the best interests of our common country, I will, if elected, use every effort to further the material progress of the Dominion, and to promote the prosperity of the City of Montreal.

In February, when addressing the electors, he told them he did not intend to make any explicit statement of his political principles. He said :

I was an active politician of the time when the good old custom—if it were a good old custom—was in vogue of verbal nominations, when each candidate spoke about the other, and sometimes when he did not spare his opponent's feelings. But since you have been so very good to meet here on this occasion to re-affirm your approval of my nomination as your candidate for the Western division of Montreal, I must tell you that it is very gratifying to me indeed, and that I value very highly the good opinions of the gentlemen whom I see before me, as well as of many others who, I am informed, look favourably on my nomination.

I am disposed to judge of measures more than of men. At the same time, if a government may have made some blunders, I am not disposed to oppose them because of this. We know that success depends not on absolute perfection, but that, with individuals as with governments, to make fewest mistakes is the criterion of success. I will not be disposed to denounce the whole policy of a government because of this measure or of that measure, provided it be not one of

principle and one calculated to be injurious to the community and the Dominion at large. I come forward as an independent candidate, prepared to give my support to what I believe is in the interests of my constituents and of vital interest to the Dominion.

He continued :

I shall do everything in my power that may be required in forwarding the interests of the Dominion in respect to what is known as the National Policy, and I shall encourage that due and proper protection which is necessary for the industries of a new country.

We are not usually given to boasting in Canada. We know, and we are not ashamed to own, that we are a smaller and poorer people at this very moment than those on the other side of the line. While they maintain high protective tariffs, if we allowed everything to come in here just as they should like, we all know what would very soon become of Canada. We must judge facts by the circumstances of the moment, and of the place. While Free Trade may be very good for England, and while I might support it there with certain modification, I should be very sorry to see it introduced in this country and would oppose its adoption. I do not mean that duties should become so onerous as to militate against the material interests of one class or the other. The National Policy is for the benefit of all. We know that if you have not manufactories, and if you have not the means of giving work to the people of the country, you cannot have prosperity and progress. While we may have articles at a low price, yet, if wages were also very low, the workman would lack the means of purchasing them. Simply to be able to purchase at a low price, with wages also exceptionally low, would be no advantage to the people. But we know, on the contrary, that the effect of Protection has been materially to increase the demand for labour and raise the wages of the workman, without adding to the costs of the necessaries of life. If you have not your industries in full blast, you can have no prosperity.

Regarding technical education, he said :

There is one reform which I think should be introduced into Canada, so as to enable our employers of labour and those whom they employ to compete with the other people of other countries. I think we should all—manufacturers and workmen alike—put our shoulder to the wheel and endeavour to have established technical and trade schools, which would be of immense advantage to the great mass of the people. We all know that occasionally there is a slight suspicion thrown on the sincerity of promises made during an election cam-

paign. So perhaps it is better I should not make too many promises, but this I believe to be a benefit to the country upon which men of all shades of politics can join.

As the campaign proceeded he addressed many meetings, and had to dwell frequently upon Sir John Macdonald's National Policy :

We all know that for some eight years back we have had a measure of prosperity in Canada which was absent for many years before. We know and we appreciate that this in a very great measure is owing to the proper protection which has been given to the industries of Canada by the Conservative Government. This protection was necessary to make Canada a great nation. If we had not the National Policy, Canada would have been swamped by the importation of goods from the United States and elsewhere, and we would neither have manufacturers in the country nor employment for our people. Therefore it is that I believe we should maintain the position which we now hold, and which I shall endeavour to do so far as it lies in my power. I feel that in voting for the men who claim your suffrages as supporters of the National Policy you will be doing the best possible thing to support your own interests.

During the course of another speech he told his hearers :

When I was returning on the steamer to New York, I met an American gentleman, The talk turned on the National Policy in Canada, and he, being an extensive manufacturer, took some interest in the question, holding that before the National Policy was introduced in Canada he was doing a fine trade, but since we learned to make our own goods for own markets, and to protect our native industries, he could not sell in Canada at all. The question for working-men and manufacturers is : " Do you want to return to lower wages and no lower prices for the necessaries of life ? " as was the case during the Liberal administration ; or " Do you wish to remain happy and prosperous and progressive as you are at present ? " The course for the constituencies is to support the National Policy candidates, to keep things as they are—to make them much better.

One of the largest woollen manufactories in the Dominion wrote me how the National Policy affected their factory in Sherbrooke. Before the introduction of the National Policy the wages paid to employees were $80,000, and for the seven years since the wages were more than 50 per cent. beyond this. During the seven years of the National Policy they had paid $246,000 more to those employed in their factories than they did before there was protection for the industry. As is the case with one factory, so it is all over Canada ;

and as our population and industries grow the necessity for this policy on the part of the Government will become all the more imperative if our country is to prosper. I have no doubt that you, the electors, will see the necessity for sustaining the Government in this policy, and that you will give a hearty and generous support to the candidates who are pledged to advocate it.

On February 23rd the election took place, and Sir Donald was triumphantly returned. At a banquet given in his honour in the following month he said :

Having spent fifty years of my life in Canada, I can claim to be a Canadian. And while calling yourselves Canadians you can also rejoice in the rejoicings of the Mother Country, and that you will have this year an opportunity of celebrating the Jubilee of Her Majesty. We have cause to be satisfied that we have been under the beneficent reign of that Queen, and that no part of the world has progressed more during those fifty years than Canada. With all the facilities we at present enjoy for coming together, with the railway, the telegraph and the telephone facilities, by which those two thousand miles away are brought nearer together than was Montreal and Ottawa thirty years ago, what will this country be thirty years hence, if we are true to ourselves ?

Jointly with Lord Mount Stephen, he set apart one million dollars to erect a great hospital in Montreal to commemorate the Jubilee of Queen Victoria. Later, when the building had been erected on the side of the mountain, they gave equally in the sum of eight hundred thousand to endow the institution. There can be no finer site for a hospital in the world. It overlooks the whole city of Montreal and the valley of the St. Lawrence. Behind rises the mountain, terraced with lovely sylvan retreats; before lie the squares and steeples, the glittering river; and beyond that, on the south shore, the open country, with here and there a domed mountain, and at intervals a town or village marked by a wreath of smoke or the steeple of a parish church that flashes like a poniard in the sun.

This hospital, the Royal Victoria, is an admirably equipped institution. Modern science has been exhausted to furnish it adequately, and it is possible, by reason of the

large endowment, to keep pace with the newest discoveries and inventions.

In February, 1888, Sir Donald's only daughter, Margaret Charlotte, married Mr. Robert Jared Bliss Howard, of Montreal, son of the Dean of the Faculty of Medicine at McGill University, and three years later Sir Donald's first grandson, Donald Sterling Palmer, the present heir to the barony, was born.[1]

Sir Donald had long had his thoughts directed towards educational schemes and institutions, and was already a liberal patron of McGill University. On November 1st, 1889, he was inaugurated Chancellor of this seat of learning. The ceremony took place in the William Molson Hall, and the room was crowded with influential citizens and students of both sexes. The Governors and the Faculty entered the room attired in their robes, and were loudly cheered by the students, who rose in a body to receive them. Sir Donald followed in his black gown with the red hood, cap in hand, walking slowly past the rows of cheering students.

The chairman introduced the new Chancellor. Having alluded to the fact that Sir Donald's exalted position, and the interest he took in the cause of education, entitled him to a high place in their regard, he said that in selecting Sir Donald Smith as Chancellor they felt that the honour was well bestowed.

The senior member of the Board of Governors, Mr. Peter Redpath, then conducted Sir Donald to the chair amidst cheers. Mr. Redpath congratulated him upon his election to an office of which any man might be proud, which was the highest honour the University could bestow. The Governors, in choosing their Chancellor, had not disappointed public expectation, and he believed that, under Sir

[1] A daughter, Frances Margaret Palmer (now the Hon. Mrs. Kitson), was born in 1889. The second son, Lieutenant the Hon. Robert Henry Palmer, born in 1893, was killed in action in May, 1915. The other children of this marriage are Edith, born in 1895, and Arthur, born in 1896.

Donald's administration, the University would continue to enjoy the prosperity which had for a number of years attended it. In response the Chancellor said :

I thank you, as earnestly and as sincerely as it is possible for me to do, for the greeting you have given me. This University cannot boast of as great antiquity as Bologna or Paris. But as Oxford and Cambridge are the oldest in England, and Harvard is the oldest in America, so is McGill the oldest in Canada. Of the great men who were trained in the European schools, it is unnecessary for me to speak, as it would be impossible for me to say anything you do not already know regarding them ; but you must premise as the outcome of Harvard's teaching the standard of intellect and education[1] which is impressed on the people of Boston and New England generally. Is it not also the case with ourselves ? Is not the desire for elegance and good taste observable in our surroundings in the city owing to the great intelligence which has resulted from the larger facilities offered in late years for higher education ; and that especially by McGill ?

Regarding those who have filled the chair before me—humbly following their example—I will endeavour to act to the best of my ability whilst it may be permitted me to fill this honourable position.

On June 6th, 1891, Sir John Macdonald passed away. Writing to the Marquess of Lorne on June 9th, Sir Donald said :

The death of Sir John Macdonald not only removes the greatest man in Canada—but for whom the confederation of these Provinces might never have been achieved—but it takes away the source of patriotic inspiration of our best men. I was late in entering political life, but I at once, as if I had been a much younger man, enrolled myself under his banner and regret nothing so much as the temporary estrangement which circumstances unhappily brought about. Notwithstanding this, I never once ceased to hold him in regard and was truly rejoiced when it became possible for me to return openly to my allegiance.

As Governor-General, Lord Stanley of Preston (afterwards Earl of Derby) was succeeded by the Earl of Aberdeen. Regarding this Sir Donald wrote to Sir William Butler :

[1] He was once asked what, in his opinion, was the finest product of modern civilisation. His reply was, " A well educated American."

Lord Aberdeen in Canada

As to Lord Aberdeen's appointment, we can only hope for the best. We have so far been especially favoured by Providence in the matter of Governors-General. In this case the fact of Lord Aberdeen's being a great favourite with Mr. Gladstone will not predispose many in his favour; but I believe he is earnest, and industrious, and a Scotsman of rank and lineage, which in itself signifies a great deal. Then, as I need hardly remind you, there is her ladyship!

In the Canadian political world at this time affairs were growing troublous. Sir John Thompson's death at the close of 1894 had greatly shaken the Conservatives. Both the party and the country were restive under the Premiership of Sir Mackenzie Bowell, and in January, 1896, an embarrassing upheaval came.

Seven Ministers handed in their resignations to Sir Mackenzie Bowell. The truth is, the Prime Minister was hardly able to cope with the situation, and there was a general demand that Sir Charles Tupper, who then filled the position of High Commissioner in London, should be summoned back to lead the party.

Parliament met on the 7th of the month, when Hon. George E. Foster explained the reasons which had induced him and his colleagues to resign. It was, he said, from no feeling of personal dislike or personal ambition, but solely in order to conserve the party and the country.

In other words, the wholesale resignations were to pave the way for the prorogation of a Government whose Premier could not command the confidence of all colleagues.

In the circumstances, and there being, in truth, no Government, none were surprised to learn of Sir Mackenzie Bowell's decision to resign. It was then that a new difficulty arose—Lord Aberdeen, the Governor-General, refused to accept the Premier's resignation. No consideration had been given to the Speech from the Throne, and affairs of administration were generally in such a state as to demand a further effort to reconstruct the Ministry. The effort was made, and on Sir Charles Tupper consenting to enter

the Cabinet as President of the Privy Council the recalcitrant Ministers returned.

Thus ended a nine days' wonder. Its chief interest for us now is the narrowness by which Sir Donald Smith escaped being drawn into the arena. An influential section desired that he assume the leadership of the party.

"There is one man, and one man alone," said one member,[1] "who can save the Liberal-Conservative Party from falling to pieces, and also who can command the respect and confidence of the whole country, and that is Sir Donald A. Smith."

The member for Montreal West was sounded. He shrank from the proposal, declaring that, with a statesman such as Sir Charles Tupper alive, there was no need for him to assume the burden of responsibility.

No sooner was the internal division healed than an affair of magnitude came which put the statesmanship of the Government to a severe test. The seemingly eternal question of race and religion had again reached an acute stage in Manitoba. In an Empire such as ours it is always present; it is the problem of good citizenship to see that it never engenders bitterness and animosity dangerous to the State.

The French Roman Catholic population of Manitoba demanded separate schools where their children should be taught their own language and religion. The Manitoba Legislature opposed this demand, and passed an Act abolishing denominational schools.

In May, 1894, the cardinals, archbishops, and bishops of the Roman Catholic Church petitioned the Governor-General in Council to disallow the Manitoba School Act of 1894. By Order in Council of July 26th, 1894, the Privy Council recommended that the petition should be transmitted to the Lieutenant-Governor of Manitoba, and expressed the hope that the Legislature of that Province would take steps to remove the grievances complained of in the petition.

[1] Sir Sam Hughes.

Again, by Order in Council of July 27th, 1895, the Dominion Government invited the Manitoba Government to enter into friendly negotiations in order to ascertain how far the latter were prepared to go in meeting the wishes of the minority, so that the Dominion might, if possible, be relieved from the duty of intervening. The Provincial authorities paid no attention to the invitation, and it was publicly and triumphantly declared that they had no intention of helping the Federal Government out of a difficulty.

Instantly the Provincial authorities, led by Hon. Thomas Greenway, the Premier, were up in arms and flouted the Order in Council. A Remedial Bill was introduced soon after Parliament met. It sought to restore to the Roman Catholic minority in Manitoba the rights and privileges in regard to the education of their children, of which they were deprived by the Provincial legislation of 1890, and which the judgment of the Judicial Committee of the Imperial Privy Council declared Parliament had the power to restore. It professed, also, to interfere as little as possible with the functions of the Legislature and Government of Manitoba. The nature of the measure was such, however, that almost every clause of it dealt with acts that the constitutional law meant to be performed under authority of Provincial legislation, that are, therefore, best so performed, and that would continue to be so performed in Manitoba if the religious majority in that Province had held the spirit of the Constitution in the same respect as it has been held by the religious majorities of Quebec and Ontario.

The task of the Government was additionally unpleasant, in that the Bill, if passed into an Act of Parliament, would probably fail to effect its purpose. It had to count on the goodwill of the people and Legislature of Manitoba for so much that, if the goodwill were withheld, the Roman Catholic minority would not enjoy the full benefits of the provision Parliament, when it established the Province, destined them to enjoy. The financial side bristled with

difficulties. The Bill provided that the municipal authorities should collect and pay to the trustees of the separate schools, to be established, all local school taxes levied upon consenting Roman Catholic ratepayers. In 1894 the total of such taxes in this Province amounted to $354,963. They were supplemented by grants by the Legislature of that Province to the extent of $101,013. Nearly a third of the school revenue from taxation, therefore, came out of the Provincial Treasury.

A Remedial Bill, following the lines of the Imperial Privy Council decision, declared that the religious minority should have a right to share in this; but it was clearly impossible for Parliament to dictate to the Legislature of a Province how, or to whom, it should distribute its revenue. If the Legislature of Manitoba declined to pay any heed to the provisions of the Remedial Bill in this particular, the Roman Catholics would have to depend on the local assessments alone for means to keep their schools in operation. In poor localities and sparsely-settled localities, or localities where the Roman Catholics were a small element in the general population, this virtually meant that there would be no separate schools.

In other words, that would happen in Manitoba which has since happened in the Province of Quebec with regard to Protestant schools. The religious majority would inevitably crush the minority out of existence.

Both sides assumed an uncompromising attitude. Naturally, the clergy and clerical party of Quebec flew to the succour of their co-religionists in Manitoba. The Orangemen of Ontario responded by snatching up the cudgels against Rome and Papal machinations. The air rang with vituperation, and for several weeks it wanted but little to precipitate a dangerous conflict.

Meanwhile, the citizens at large, and a Government by no means agreed amongst themselves, seeing no satisfactory solution of the difficulty, prayed for the advent of a pacifi-

cator. And a pacificator appeared. Many considerations tended to make Sir Donald Smith's assumption of the rôle most appropriate—his patriarchal age, his freedom from the bonds of party, his well-known benevolence, but chiefly what he had effected in his famous mission of conciliation to the North-West a quarter of a century before. Nevertheless, he was, in this instance, his own monitor.

It was impossible, or, at least, would have been highly imprudent, for the Government to send him forth again on a mission of conciliation. He went, therefore, in a private capacity. But what he lost in official status he made up for by his own character and reputation.

The difficulty was to ascertain whether what he proposed was politically desirable. It would not do to compromise the Ministry, or to excite the alarms or the enmity of the Opposition. He resolved to consult the Governor-General, Lord Aberdeen, not as a politician or a member of Parliament, but as a private citizen anxious to perform a simple act of good citizenship. Advantage was taken of an invitation to luncheon at Rideau Hall, at which both Lord Aberdeen and his indefatigable consort listened to Sir Donald's plan of mediation. Both approved of it with enthusiasm. Sir Donald subsequently asserted:

> I wish to say very distinctly that I did not go at the instance of the Government. It is true that I had the privilege of communicating with his Excellency the Governor-General, not so much as Her Majesty's representative here, but as one who, as we all know, has taken a very warm and deep interest in everything that is for the benefit of Canada. Having, incidentally, had an opportunity of speaking of this very important matter of the Manitoba School question, His Excellency was good enough to express to me his very great desire that it should be satisfactorily settled in one way or the other, so as to be agreeable not only to the people of that Province, but also to the people of the Dominion as a whole, desiring it should be disposed of outside altogether of party politics, for we know that the Governor-General never allows himself to become a partisan, and that he is here as the representative of Her Majesty, to look equally at all sides, and to discriminate against none.

I myself was greatly impressed with the view that, were it possible to dispose of this matter outside of Parliament, it would be for the general good ; and I consequently determined to go to Manitoba with the view of seeing Mr. Greenway and some of his colleagues, and of endeavouring to ascertain if there could not be found a satisfactory way out of the difficulty. I may mention that had it not been for the fact that, owing to serious illness, I was unable to leave my house for three or four months, I certainly would have visited Manitoba some time before ; but it is never too late to attempt to do what ought to be done.[1]

The weather was bitterly cold and tempestuous at the time, and Sir Donald, who was far from well, had been ordered by his physician, Dr. Roddick, to repair at once to Florida.

On February 15th his servant packed his luggage. He bade his wife farewell, and not until the following day did she or any of his friends learn that he had departed for Manitoba instead. He arrived in Winnipeg on the 18th, and, although he was careful to disclose nothing to the newspaper representatives concerning his mission, it was immediately telegraphed all over the Dominion that he was in Winnipeg for a definite political purpose.

Commenting on this the Montreal *Gazette* observed :

The statement has been repeated so frequently, and no denial given, that there can really be no doubt of its accuracy. And besides, Sir Donald, beyond receiving his scores of old personal and political friends, and attending to the little social amenities consequent upon a visit to his old home, is said to have done little else but interview the men who have it in their power to make any settlement of the case. He is known to have spent hours with Premier Greenway and His Grace the Archbishop of St. Boniface,[2] but whether there will be any practical result therefrom time must be left to develop. That Sir Donald is acting sincerely and is really desirous of performing a service to the State by snatching from the arena of public discussion a brand which, if left where it is, may result in disaster to Confederation, can be pretty generally taken for granted by all who know him and understand his character and motives.

[1] *Parliamentary Debates*, March, 1896.
[2] The late Mgr. Langerin.

It went on to say:

That he would like, incidentally, to assist his party may perhaps be true, but it is better to credit him with the higher motive. However much all Canadians would like to see the question settled, it is difficult to see how Mr. Greenway can make any concessions that would satisfy the Ministry. With a fresh mandate from the people to stand by the National School System, no one would surely be bold enough to expect that he would commit political suicide by sacrificing the schools. The Government has all along professed to be most anxious to administer the School Act in the most liberal manner, so as to meet the wishes of the minority as far as possible, providing no great principles were sacrificed; but further than that it is difficult to see how they can go.

This was perfectly true. It was, as Mr. Greenway told his distinguished visitor, difficult to see how they could go further. Yet it was not enough to restore peace or to carry out the pledge tacitly made in 1870.

On his return a few weeks later, Sir Donald told the House of Commons:

The great difficulty in which Canada is at this time, and England as well, should be another inducement for us to do justice to the minority in Manitoba. There has been a promise made, made, it is true, to a few thousands of people, who have been spoken of here as poor half-breeds, but who, on the whole, I can assure you, are very intelligent men.

He pointed out that in 1870 the schools were voluntary; the Roman Catholics had their own and the Protestants had theirs, and there were certain grants of money given to each.

The Hudson's Bay Company, then the governing body, made a grant to the late Archbishop Taché. There was a grant given to the one and to the other—a money grant as well as a grant of land—for school purposes; and, although not much was said about schools, it was distinctly understood by the people there, and the promise was made to those people that they would have every privilege, on joining Canada, which they possessed at that time. "Such promise," he said, "I gave as a Special Commissioner from the Dominion of Canada."

He continued:

If the Convention did not enter minutely and particularly into the description of the separate schools, it was because they thought it altogether unnecessary. Any Convention about separate schools was never dreamt of by them. They were a simple-minded people. To show that they were really so, and that they went very much on good faith, I may mention how properties were conveyed from one to another. There were no long or written contracts; all that was necessary was that the parties interested should go to the official of the Hudson's Bay Company, who kept the land register, and mention verbally to him that it was desired to make over such and such property to a particular person, and the transaction was concluded. That shows, I think, that they were simple-minded, and that they had an idea, a belief, that when their word was pledged it was as good as all the deeds that could be written. So it was with regard to the promises that were made to them at that time. They knew that they had their schools, and they believed that the promises would be well and faithfully kept, and they did not deem it necessary to have anything of a more binding character with regard to them.

This is apparent, I think, from what took place in the Legislature of Manitoba in 1871, when the School Law was passed. It may not be known to a great many of the members here that many of those who composed the Legislature of that time were members of this very Convention; and in deciding that there should be separate schools they were looking to what had passed in this Convention; they had it fresh in their minds. Therefore, I certainly think that the people of Red River, then the majority, now the minority, are entitled to all the privileges that are given to the majority at the present day. I think that in one way or another we should insist that they have full justice, and that whether in the form of separate schools, or in some other way, still that justice shall be done, and that faith shall be kept with those people.[1]

Sir Donald returned to Ottawa during the last days of February. He had by this time been so accustomed to traducement, and to having base motives imputed to his simplest actions, that he was hardly surprised when one or two public journals hinted that in his self-appointed mission to Manitoba he had not been altogether disinterested. On this subject he wrote:

[1] *Debates*, House of Commons, March, 1896.

Appeals to Mr. Greenway

It has been insinuated that, if I did go to Manitoba ostensibly for the purpose of aiding in settling this vexed question, it was no philanthropic idea I had in my head, but that it was for the advantage of a certain corporation with which I happened to be connected, namely, the Canadian Pacific Railway Company. It was said that there was a question coming up of a demand on the Government, a request to the Government concerning the sale of a certain portion of the Company's lands. I believe it is said that the sum was twenty or twenty-four millions, but it really does not matter ; a few millions, a dozen millions, more or less, do not matter nowadays. So it was said that the Canadian Pacific Railway had approached the Government with a view of selling to them their lands. The Canadian Pacific Railway Company have not approached, and have no thought of approaching, the Government with any idea of selling any of their land, and the rumour is entirely without foundation in truth.

A few days after he had left Winnipeg one result of his mission was announced. Mr. Clifford Sifton, the Attorney-General, moved in the Provincial Legislature on February 25th :

That a committee of the whole House should consider a resolution protesting against Federal interference, inviting an inquiry and protesting that coercive legislation would not accomplish the relief of the minority, but would prove disappointing, and should be resisted.

The motion proceeded as follows :

In amending the School Law from time to time, and in administering the school system, it has been our earnest desire to remedy any well-founded grievance, and remove any appearance of inequality or injustice brought to our notice, and to consider any complaint in a spirit of fairness and conciliation.

Sir Donald consulted with the Prime Minister and Sir Charles Tupper as to the conduct of the Remedial Bill. It was agreed that the Government was in an awkward predicament. Having established personal relations with Mr. Greenway and his colleagues, could not Sir Donald induce them to come to Ottawa? No time was to be lost, and the member for Montreal West prepared a lengthy telegram in which he appealed to the Liberal leaders in Manitoba to cast

politics to the winds and come to Ottawa in the character of patriots.

To this appeal a brief reply was forthcoming:

Your telegram has received the most careful consideration of myself and colleagues. While fully appreciating all you say, it is quite clear to us that we can only proceed to Ottawa for the purpose of holding a conference upon the official invitation of the Dominion Government.—GREENWAY.

But the Bowell Ministry were not inclined to commit themselves. The Opposition, led by Mr. Wilfrid Laurier, was pressing them hard, and the sympathy of the country was showing plainly against them.

The debate began, and was continued with much heat for many days. On March 19th Sir Donald Smith rose to deliver the speech which was the feature of the debate.

The House, jaded and weary, was waiting for six o'clock, in the hope of a short adjournment, when, suddenly and unexpectedly, the venerable figure of the member for Montreal West rose from the front row of the Conservative benches.

"No sooner had the news spread to the lobbies that Sir Donald Smith had the floor than the members began to pour into the almost deserted chamber. Scarcely could the ringing of the division bell have quicker filled the vacant benches, and as the voice of the patriarchal member gained in power with the warming of the speaker to the subject of his speech, so did the attention of the House become enchained in rapt interest."[1]

It is impossible to do more here than indicate the outlines of a lengthy speech. Referring to his visit to Winnipeg, Sir Donald said:

I was met by Mr. Greenway and his colleagues in a manner that led me to believe that they had an honest desire to do what was right in the matter. It is only justice to those gentlemen to say that they appeared to me to be most anxious to have the matter settled so as to do substantial justice to the minority, as well as to the majority. I

[1] *Manitoba Free Press*, March 20th, 1896.

was permitted confidentially to represent this to the Government here, and I feel sure that it is their earnest desire to exhaust all means within their power to have justice done in the way in which I believe it can best be done, and that is through the local Government. True, it is within the power of this Parliament to pass a Remedial Bill, and if there is no other way of attaining the end which we are all of opinion ought to be accomplished, that of having equal justice done to the minority and to the majority, if after every means of obtaining that, from what I may be permitted to call the legitimate source, is exhausted, and it is found impossible to get justice for the minority, then I consider that the responsibility rests with this Parliament, and that this Parliament ought to apply a remedy.

I trust, and I have every confidence, hon. gentlemen opposite will all feel that it is their duty as well as the duty of those on this side of the House to assist in every possible way to bring about a settlement. I cannot see myself that there is any necessity for a Commission to inquire into well-known facts and circumstances, but I do trust and desire that there may be, at any rate, a personal *rapprochement* of the two Governments, that there shall be a conference. I am afraid, while I am sure many efforts in the right direction have been made by the Ministry to effect what they believe would be a satisfactory solution of this matter, they have not personally come together in such a way as to be able to exchange each other's views, wishes and ideas, and so have an opportunity of deciding in that way what can best be done under the circumstances.

I will say to the leader of the Opposition, and to hon. gentlemen on both sides of this House, that I trust they will join heartily and cordially together, and that each will, if possible, endeavour to outdo the other in his desire and in his determination to do justice to all classes in Manitoba, and to do it in the best way. This question must be taken out altogether from the arena of party politics. Let us all look only to the best interests of the country. If in the end it is found that justice—a proper measure of justice—cannot be obtained from the Province of Manitoba, it will then be the right and ought to be the duty of this House to intervene.

I heard a much-respected prelate of the Episcopal Church, one of the highest authorities in that Church, say that, while his own people were, perhaps, in favour of separate schools, still, he did not desire to see these schools administered by a dual government, and he would desire and wish, above all things, that such arrangements were made that the schools of the Catholics and of the Protestants should be under the jurisdiction of the local Government. It is my earnest wish and solicitude that there shall be no religious feuds in this country,

that neighbours shall be neighbours indeed, and that they will do unto others that which they desire should be done to themselves. That is the golden rule.

He closed his speech by urging the House to pass the Government's Remedial Bill :

Once more I would express the earnest hope that this school question may be settled, and settled to the satisfaction, not only of this House, but of the whole country. I should like to see this Remedial Bill pass to its second reading by acclamation. But by voting for the second reading of the Bill gentlemen are not necessarily committed to vote for the third reading of the Bill. If there should be a conference in the meantime—and I trust that there may be one—I am so hopeful of the result of that conference that I believe there will be no Remedial Bill required from this House.

It was, of course, not to be expected that the disclosure of a preliminary interview with the Governor-General would be overlooked by members of the Opposition. Accordingly, the member for North Simcoe (Mr. McCarthy) asked the Government the question :

Was Sir Donald Smith authorised on behalf of the Government to negotiate with the Premier or administration of the Province of Manitoba in reference to or on the subject of the school law of that Province ?

To this Sir Charles Tupper replied instantly in the negative. On receiving this answer, Mr. Joseph Martin leapt to his feet, and exclaimed :

Why, may I ask, was it necessary for His Excellency the Governor-General to call in another adviser ? We have got seventeen or eighteen Ministers of the Crown, and none of them appear to have taken this matter in hand. Why ? . . . .

Surely it is most unfortunate that any public act of the Government should be communicated to this House, not by His Excellency's advisers, who are responsible to this House for the public acts of the Government, but by a private member of the House. Surely this shows what little appreciation the Government has of their responsibility in this connection, that they should allow a public act of

government, for which now they assume, after being practically forced to assume, after the discussion in this House, full responsibility, to be so brought forward.

In a few days the Cabinet met and resolved that if the mountain Manitoba would not come to Mahomet, Mahomet should travel to Manitoba. Sir Donald's suggestion of a private conference was adopted, and a commission was issued to Hon. Mr. Dickey, Minister of Justice, Senator Desjardins, Minister of Militia, and Sir Donald Smith to proceed to Winnipeg to negotiate with the Manitoba Government with a view to a compromise. In the interval Parlialiament continued the consideration of the Bill restoring denominational schools to the Catholics of Manitoba.

The political situation derived an additional piquancy from the fact that the Canadian Liberal Opposition was already inclined to support the action of the Liberal Government of Manitoba. The leader of the Canadian Opposition was a French-Canadian, Hon. Wilfrid Laurier. Apart from its religious tendencies, one of the cardinal principles of Liberalism, as of Democracy in America, is the sacredness of Provincial rights—of local autonomy. Here French-Canadian Liberals ran counter to the Roman Catholic hierarchy.

In vain the Church thundered its anathemas from a thousand pulpits. In vain Mr. Laurier was warned that he would alienate the majority in Quebec from his party. He was unmoved either by threats or predictions of political disaster. It was alleged that his own personal lukewarmness in matters of religion assisted to render him complacent while " thousands of his race and speech were slowly being morally strangled in Manitoba."

* * * * * *

What proposals had Sir Donald Smith and his fellow-Commissioners, on their arrival at Winnipeg, to make to Mr. Greenway and his colleagues ?

Drafted in Sir Donald Smith's hand, the " Suggestions for Settlement of Manitoba School Question " run thus :

Legislation shall be passed at the present session of the Manitoba Legislature to provide that in towns and villages where there are resident, say, twenty-five Roman Catholic children of school age, and in cities where there are, say, fifty of such children, the Board of Trustees shall arrange that such children shall have a school-house or room for their own use, where they may be taught by a Roman Catholic teacher; and Roman Catholic parents or guardians, say, ten in number may appeal to the Department of Education from any decision or neglect of the Board in respect of its duties under this clause, and the Board shall observe and carry out all decisions and directions of the Department on any such appeal.

Provision shall be made by this legislation that schools, wherein the majority of children are Catholics, shall be exempt from the requirements of the regulations as to religious exercises.

That text-books be permitted in Catholic schools such as will not offend the religious views of the minority, and which, from an educational standpoint, shall be satisfactory to the Advisory Board.

Catholics to have representation on the Advisory Board; Catholics to have representation on the Board of Examiners appointed to examine teachers for certificates.

It is also claimed that Catholics should have assistance in the maintenance of a normal school for the education of their teachers.

The existing system of permits to non-qualified teachers in Catholic schools to be continued for, say, two years, to enable them to qualify, and then to be entirely discontinued.

In all other respects the schools at which Catholics attend to be public schools, and subject to every provision of the Education Acts for the time being in force in Manitoba.

A written agreement having been arrived at, and the necessary legislation passed, the Remedial Bill now before Parliament is to be withdrawn, and any rights and privileges which might be claimed by the minority, in view of the decision of the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council, shall, during the due observance of such agreement, remain in abeyance, and be not further insisted upon.

In a subsequent communication, in reply to one from the Manitoba Government, the Commissioners observed:

We must draw your attention to the flagrant injustice of the present system, which compels Roman Catholics to contribute to schools to which they cannot conscientiously send their children, and we beg to submit that this fact deserves due weight and consideration. It is to be further noted that the Roman Catholics earnestly desire a complete system of separate schools, on which only their own money

would be expended, a state of matters which would meet the observation under consideration, but which you decline to grant. Our suggestion was to relieve you from the necessity of going as far as this. It is, perhaps, impossible to devise a system that would be entirely unobjectionable theoretically and in the abstract. We had great hope that what we suggested would commend itself to your judgment as a practical scheme doing reasonably substantial justice to all classes, and securing that harmony and tranquillity which are, perhaps, more than anything else to be desired in a young and growing community, such as is now engaged in the task of developing the resources of Manitoba.

The Remedial Bill as a practical measure was doomed.

It was impossible for the existing Federal regime to settle the question. Only the advent of Mr. Laurier to power paved the way for a working arrangement in the following year. This arrangement was carried in the teeth of the Roman Catholic hierarchy, who fulminated bitterly against Mr. Laurier and threatened to invoke the interference of the Pope.

Nine months later, when he had become High Commissioner, Sir Donald met the Canadian Solicitor-General, Mr. Fitzpatrick, himself a Roman Catholic, in London, and undertook to assist the further negotiations.

Writing on this subject to Mr. Wilfrid Laurier on January 6th, 1897, he said :

Mr. Fitzpatrick explained to me his mission in respect of the Manitoba School Question, and I at once communicated with Mr. Chamberlain regarding an interview on the subject, after explaining to him very fully the position of the case and its gravity as regards the well-being and best interests of Canada, and assuring him that the settlement come to was the best that under the circumstances could be arrived at, meeting the approval of the great body of the English-speaking people, both Catholic and Protestant, and the greater part of those of French origin.

I asked Mr. Chamberlain if he would be good enough to extend to Mr. Fitzpatrick official recognition on the part of the British Government at the Vatican. Mr. Chamberlain regretted his inability to do so, as the English Government has no direct relations with the Papal Government, but expressed entire sympathy with the object in view, and said he would gladly give the Solicitor-General a letter of intro-

duction to the Duke of Norfolk, who is understood to be the one British subject having great influence with the Pope. He at the same time suggested securing the active aid of Cardinal Vaughan.

On the evening of the same day, I introduced Mr. Fitzpatrick to the Secretary of State for the Colonies. Mr. Fitzpatrick presented his case with clearness and much ability, Mr. Chamberlain handing him an introduction to His Grace of Norfolk and repeating the assurance he had given me that he would gladly aid in the matter as far as he could.

Later in the evening, Mr. Fitzpatrick and I dined with the Lord Chief Justice (Lord Russell of Killowen), an old friend of mine, meeting at this table Judge Matthews and other Catholic gentlemen eminent in legal circles, as well as Mr. Edward Blake, M.P., who were unanimous in opinion that every proper effort should be made to ensure that the Roman Catholic Bishops and Clergy of Quebec accept the settlement come to by your Government on the School Question.

I shall only add that if in any way I can aid towards a satisfactory solution of this vexed question, you may count on my best efforts.

CHAPTER XX

GOVERNOR OF THE COMPANY (1889-1914)

WE will now return to Sir Donald Smith's connection with the affairs of the Hudson's Bay Company.

After his election as Governor, he soon recognised his powerlessness to stay the rapacity of the shareholders, and, in 1892, he estimated the life of the Company, on its fur-trading side, at two years.

Chief Factor W. J. Christie, writing to a fellow-officer on April 15th of that year, observed :

> The end of the Hudson's Bay Company cannot be far off. Sir Donald Smith told Chief Factor Camsell that two years more and the Hudson's Bay Company would be a thing of the past. I am sorry for the officers who gave a life service to the Hudson's Bay Company and have not been able to save enough for their old age.

The *personnel* of the service had lamentably deteriorated of late years, and for this the responsibility rested mainly with the Company. In August, 1890, Factor Mactavish wrote :

> The trouble is, we can't get good men who understand our business, and take an interest in it. A young man has no inducement to remain in the service, and a valuable man is paid no better than a sleepy, slow fellow. I have seen new blood sent out from England, and get higher wages than I the first year, and three of them could not do my work.
>
> I have done all that I can to protect the Bay trade, but if I get abused for my trouble I shall not assist others who are not competent to manage the charge they have. Four Moose Indians came up this summer along with the opposition. I got them away from the opposition and sent them back to Moose. They were all down on ————, who never could manage Indians.

Factor W. H. Adams echoed the same complaint :

There is no inducement to young men to remain with the Company when they can see their way to better futures elsewhere. There are now so many opportunities for men of ability to obtain remuneration such as the Company will never pay. During the whole of my service I could not fail to observe that the suggestions of their experienced officers were systematically ignored by the Governor and Committee, and I know that their action in this connection, in many instances, conduced to a petty rather than an increased energy in the interests of the Company's affairs, resulting, in my opinion, most detrimentally to the latter.

In 1891 the need of larger dividends on an enormously swollen capital suggested a further pressure of the screw upon the unfortunate wintering partners. Even the fund set aside for their benefit was now in danger. Old officers who had served the Company for years were allowed to die, without any adequate provision being made for their dependents. Writing in January, 1891, Factor J. H. Lawson observed :

. . . I [note] what you say about Chief Factor Cotter's family, and am sorry to hear that they are left in such poor circumstances, and without deriving any benefit from the pension fund. I do not quite understand the working of that fund, but we will no doubt receive light on the subject later on, but if Cotter's family are penniless, I do not see why they should not get something from the Reserve Fund.

Of course, land and not fur was the Company's objective. The officials sent out by the London Board knew nothing of the fur trade. This, after all, was the traditional policy of the Board, but the officials appointed were no longer of the calibre of Sir George Simpson. Even the Labrador traffic in salmon, so valuable in Sir Donald's day, could not yield a profit, and the lot of the wintering partners became harder and harder. Roderick Ross, writing to a brother Factor on December 20th, 1891, said :

There is no mistake about it, the *fiat* has gone forth and Attila is to ravage and destroy the handiwork of the " Company of Adven-

turers," that ancient guild that has reigned in the land for two long centuries and more. The Philistines, or rather the Jews, are now at last upon us in reality, and there must be a dividend if the heavens should fall.

————'s mission is to wind up the old concern, to cremate the old government on which the new patch of 1872 was tacked only to make the rent worse as time has proved. Many of us foresaw this, and some of us fought against it to the death, but the inevitable has come to pass so that the cry of "*Sauve qui peut*" is heard as the signal of total rout. Exit Hudson's Bay Company; enter Hudson's Bay Lands and Colonisation Company, Limited.

Do you think that all this talk at late Hudson's Bay annual meetings and the shortcomings of sale in this country really mean the beginning of the end of the fur trade? If so, I will make only one other remark on this subject, and that is, that this is a very favourable moment in which to consider the possibility of the Hudson's Bay officers stepping forward in their own interests to grasp a business even yet of great promise for them for many years to come.

Would the Company oppose such a movement now? I think not, and it might be to their advantage to manage it. You can see all this better than I can, and perhaps you have still enough "go" in you to set the ball rolling. I sounded ———— the other day, on this subject, but he harped on the old slur of the impossibility of united action on our part.

I have enrolled as a pensioner, getting £200 per annum, which I am politely requested to enjoy for six years on condition that I do not engage in the fur trade, or directly or indirectly go into any commercial business of any kind in which the company is concerned! So there is a fine predicament to be in at my time of life. Is our whole life and everything we hold most dear to us to be really sacrificed to the Company, when once we doff their uniform? What do I know about anything, except the business the Company is engaged in?

I saw Sir Donald Smith over here in September. He was as kind and considerate as ever, but I asked him for no favours. The gloom and despair of a prematurely dying man has now succeeded the hopeful confidence of the bread winner who has a sacred duty to perform for those dependent on him. We are all well and although unavoidably scattered apart by mountains, plains and forests, my hope is that if God spares my life, this state of things will soon be remedied.

The following is a letter from Chief Factor S. K. Parson, written in London in April, 1892:

I had a most unsatisfactory interview with the Board and found the Deputy-Governor, Lord Lichfield, most overbearing. In fact, he would listen to nothing except his own views. After stating what he thought of the affairs in the South, he said that they intended that I should go down and put things straight.

I replied that when I consented to go for one year, I assumed that my right to retire upon giving twelve months' notice according to the Deed Poll would be respected. I pointed out that out of thirty-one years in the service, I had passed nineteen in Hudson's Bay, and that as an old officer, I considered I had not been treated with the consideration I thought myself entitled to expect. He sneered at this and suggested that I should consider my resignation as having been given in on 1st June, 1891, which suggestion I promptly acceded to, and the affair is so settled. I assume that I shall get outfit 1892, being one of the men who received no compensation under the Deed Poll. Everyone (Armit included) considers that I have done right. The whole business has been bungled, or else it is a deliberate conspiracy to drive me from the service. *The Board do not know the first thing about our business; we need none of us expect the smallest consideration from the Board.* I am a free man now.

I must say that I am sorry at leaving the service after so long being in it, and however bitter I may feel against the Company, I hope to retain my old brother officers among my warmest friends.

In the previous July, Chief Factor Bell had a similar experience:

I have written fully to Sir Donald, explaining the whole matter, telling him that after forty years' hard, honourable, faithful service I will be no man's tool. I simply made a just application for my well-deserved furlough and gave the Company a year to choose my successor.

They can, and will, no doubt, make me give in my resignation. This I will do if required, sending the notice by mail and follow my letter by the next steamer.

On May 2nd, 1892, Chief Factor Horace Belanger, of Norway House, tendered his resignation:

In compliance with the conditions of the Deed Poll, I beg to inform you that it is my intention to retire from the service on 1st June, 1893, on which date I shall have been connected with the Hudson's Bay Company for a period of forty years. During that time I have served in the following grades: Nineteen years as clerk,

one year as chief trader, twelve years as factor, and eight years as chief factor, and in whatever capacity I was employed, it has always been my earnest endeavour to do my duty to the best of my ability and to promote the interest of the Company in every way in my power. I sincerely trust that the Board as well as yourself will regard my claims on their consideration favourably, and see fit to concede me the full retiring shares.

My reason for leaving is entirely of a private nature, viz. the welfare of my family from whom I am at present obliged to be separated. At my time of life it is my duty to make a home, however humble, for my children and myself, and it is with this object in view that I have brought myself with much regretful feeling to sever my active connection with the Company in whose service I spent so many happy, though sometimes hard, years, and in whose prosperity I shall ever continue to take a deep interest.

In a letter to a brother factor Belanger said :

God knows I will have soon enough to paddle my own canoe. Next first of June I will have served the Hudson's Bay Company forty years.

Poor Belanger, he did not survive many weeks. He was found drowned in a river, and his death was regretted by all who knew his staunch and cheery character.

* * * * * *

Writing from Moose Factory on February 11th, 1893, Factor W. K. Broughton said :

I submit that the pension should have been made a vested interest, payable to one's representatives in the event of death occurring before the expiration of the six years. No matter what Sir Donald attempts to do for us, past experience has, I think, plainly shown us that the Board always take their own course in spite of him. It was so at the time of the " Round Robin." You will remember we held out for a minimum guarantee of £200 and the Board offered £150, and carried their point, too. True, we got the £200 afterwards, but they established their point in the first instance. But to resume, I cannot say that I am not glad of the six years' pension even under existing circumstances, and I feel sure that it will enable many to make homes for themselves (at any rate in this country) and sever their connection with the Company much sooner than they could otherwise have done, and this, I think, is what is desired by the Directorate.

"New blood, new blood!" is the cry, and I would take a pretty heavy bet with anyone that no new commissions will ever again be given, those holding commissions at present will be promoted from time to time if it is thought advisable to retain their services, but after this I fancy the places of those commissioned officers retiring will be taken by clerks who will be salaried according to capacity, or I should rather say "ability," and the amount of responsibility they assume.

. . . . Surely they will do something for poor old P————. It will be simply disgraceful if they don't give him a pension; has been told they have nothing for him to do and I fancy the fact of B———— not having yet been appointed to any charge points in the same direction.

In fact, "New blood—new blood!" was now the cry at all the meetings of the London Board. And Sir Donald's contemporaries disappeared, one by one, from the scene.

At the Company's annual meeting in July, 1904, Lord Strathcona pointed out that more than 130,000 immigrants had gone into Manitoba and the North-West Territories the previous year, of whom at least one-third were from neighbouring districts of the United States. He continued:

Inasmuch as the Hudson's Bay Company owns one-twentieth of the prairie acreage and is most intimately concerned with the retail business of the country, it is obvious that this immigration must bring much benefit to it.

This, of course, it did. In the year 1903-4 the Company realised £1 5s. 3d. per acre for land sold, as against £1 3s. 3d. in the previous year.

In October, 1904, owing to the vast profits which the Hudson's Bay Company were making out of the sale of lands, the Board were induced to grant a more liberal pension scheme for the men who had grown old in their service. But this scheme did not comprehend those officers who had retired prior to that year, the true heirs and successors of the Rupert's Land pioneers.

In this connection Chief Factor MacFarlane wrote to a director in October, 1907:

I have before stated that these "old officers" had given due thanks for the yearly grant of two-fifths of the amount of pension guaranteed to many of their service contemporaries, while they, no doubt, would have felt more grateful had their own equally long and faithful connection with the Company received similar recognition. Had your fellow director taken the trouble of carefully considering the subject of the complained-of letters and papers which he says Lord Strathcona had, from time to time, reported the purport of to the Board, I believe he would have better understood their import, and would at least have refrained from taxing the officers with ingratitude.

Should all of the referred-to documents be still in existence, and you desire to peruse and ponder over them at your leisure, they would certainly enlighten you on many points regarding the history and former status of the wintering partners of the Company since the coalition with the North-West Traders of Montreal in 1821. You would also, I opine, more readily than any of your colleagues (the Governor always excepted) comprehend the *raison d'être* of my own long, friendly, and truly loyal contention with them in favour of "better terms" for men who have given by far the best of their years and lives to and in zealously and faithfully maintaining the rights and interests of the Company of Adventurers of England trading into Hudson's Bay.

The Board of Directors evidently believe that they have treated the old officers very liberally. I have, however, shown that this is not the case, and we therefore sincerely hope that the youngest and oldest members of the Executive will unite in disabusing the others of this erroneous idea, which seems to favour too much of the ancient Medo-Persian policy. May I not further appeal to you as an English gentleman—a lover of justice and fair play, in all matters—to do your utmost in removing the complained-of grievance.

For obvious reasons, apart from those herein stated, it is to be earnestly hoped that the Governor and Committee will now reconsider the case of the "old officers," and at once find that they really merit the granting to them as from 1st June, 1904, the whole amount of their respective rank "time limited" pensions, and thus place them on a basis more nearly approaching that of their later brethren. This generous and retractive course would be not only warmly welcomed, but also come as a perfect "God-send" to Mrs. Lillie, Mrs. Camsell (Chief Factor Camsell died in January, 1907), as well as to nearly all of those who would benefit thereunder, and its adoption would undoubtedly elicit their profound gratitude.

In the meantime, the Governor will be able to explain to you all about the fur trade partnership, and the surrender in 1893 of certain

Deed Poll rights, which have since wholly provided the Servants' Pension Fund of £50,000 sterling. The shareholders have practically contributed nothing thereto.

There was really no just or valid reason for the rather unfair discrimination exercised by the Board in dealing with their "old officers" who retired from the service prior to June 1st, 1904. The surrender of the Deed Poll fur trade rights in 1893, without any compensation whatever, adversely affected the old officers; while, on the other hand, this valuable acquisition had given the Board the means of repaying to the shareholders not only every penny advanced by them in the way of making up former guarantees, but had furnished them with the whole amount of the Company's actual pension fund of £50,000.

The shareholders of the Hudson's Bay Company had at length acquired, without any actual outlay, the entire two-fifths rights and interests of their former fur trade partners. This fact was known to but few within the service, while citizens of the great Dominion of Canada are, for the most part, still in utter ignorance of it.

The Board of Directors maintained then, and still maintain, that their fur trade partners have, on the whole, been fairly treated, and also that the past is a closed book. But "no question is ever settled," protested one trader, "until it is rightly settled."

In 1908 Chief Factor MacFarlane again wrote:

I would once more ask you to do your utmost to aid in doing the right thing by those in whose behalf I have taken much trouble for many years past, men nearly all of whom, as the Governor well knows from his own personal experience in the service, have suffered many hardships, and endured many privations in the performance of their onerous duties in the interior.

In reply one of the directors wrote:

It is really quite useless to reopen a case long since settled or to trouble the Board further with papers and correspondence relating to a period with which the existing Hudson's Bay Company have only a historical concern.

Forty per Cent. Dividends

This "historical concern" was the possession of millions of acres of land which the wintering partners had discovered, explored and held for the Empire, and which the London shareholders were now disposing of at a rate which was making wealthy men out of many who had formerly been as poor as the Rupert's Land pioneers.

Writing in June, 1907, a Chief Factor observed:

The announcement of a dividend of £4 5s. per share on the Hudson's Bay Stock was followed by a decline of some points in the market quotation, attributed according to the *Daily Telegraph* to disappointment in the amount of the dividend declared. The grounds for this I fail to see; for 40½ per cent. on par value should be sufficiently satisfying. But some people are never satisfied, and in spite of the malcontents, if they exist, I expect to see an advance in the price of stock at no very distant date.

Yet even these dividends did not lead to any greater consideration for the men who had made this prosperity. In one instance, a capable officer died because the medical officer had been withdrawn from a district as part of the policy of "retrenchment." Regarding this, Factor W. H. Adams wrote on May 15th, 1908:

You will be grieved to hear of the death of my old brother officer, Tom Anderson, whom I had learned to like much. Had adequate advice been available, he might have been spared to many more years of useful service with the Hudson's Bay Company. It always seemed to me that the Company, in default of the Government's employing efficient medical aid in the Northern latitudes, should have provided a medical officer both in Athabasca and Mackenzie River districts, if even they had withdrawn one from Winnipeg. The expense would not have made any appreciative difference in the dividends.

Many instances might be given of Lord Strathcona's tenderness for old officers of the service who had erred or been overtaken by affliction. In one letter he wrote to the widow of a clerk who had been only five years with the Company:

I have mentioned the matter to the Board, but I am afraid it is one which they do not feel inclined to deal with at present. In the meantime I beg to enclose my personal cheque for £100, which I trust may be of use to you.

This letter is characteristic—characteristic of the man, and characteristic of his care for the Board's reputation for generosity.

To the close of his life he kept in close touch with the survivors amongst his old friends in the service, so few of whom, alas! now remained. He wrote in January, 1891:

I was very sorry to hear of Mr. Clarke's death. It is very sad to see what blanks have of recent years been made in our service from deaths alone. Dear me, there are very few alive now of the officers of twenty years ago.

The following are a few of the many letters he wrote to his old friends at this time:

MONTREAL,

To ex CHIEF FACTOR COLIN RANKIN. *October* 22, 1900.

With one or two friends who dined with me yesterday, I had an opportunity of testing the partridges you so kindly and thoughtfully sent me, and we all pronounced them to be delicious, and, besides, they remind me of old friends and old times. Please accept my sincere thanks.

Mr. Selous was fortunate in placing himself in your hands when he determined to go on a hunting expedition. He is known as a great Nimrod, and will return to his friends in England with a goodly appreciation of the sport which is to be had in Canada. His success will, no doubt, induce others of our English friends to follow his example. Should he be in Montreal while I am still in Canada I shall be very glad to see him.

My wife was very anxious to take the trip with me, but although she is stronger and in better health than she has been for some time back, at the time I left she had a slight cold, and the doctors thought it safer that she should not undertake the journey at this season of the year. We hope, however, to be back in Canada soon, and for a longer stay, which will enable us, we trust, to see yourself and many of our old friends again as in the past.

February 22, 1902.

Mr. Donald McTavish, who has done so well at Rupert's House, will, no doubt, give a good account of his stewardship at Norway House as well, as he is both painstaking and energetic.

It is to be regretted that Mr. James McDougall's health makes it necessary for him to retire from the service, as we all know what an efficient officer he has been for the Company.

To ex Chief Factor MacFarlane. *May* 17, 1902.

I now have much pleasure in informing you that the Lords Commissioner of the Admiralty have, after careful looking into the circumstances of the case, decided to award you the decoration in recognition of your valuable services, now a good many years ago. The medal is forwarded herewith, and I am informed that it is of the same pattern as those issued in 1859 to such of the crew of the *Fox* discovery ship who had not already received it. No other naval medal was awarded for Arctic service until 1876.

June 11, 1902.

I have just heard that his Grace of Rupert's Land arrived in London yesterday, and I shall take great pleasure in going to see him, and of being of use to him in any way I can.

Thank you very much for sending me the number of the Manitoba Historical Society's transactions containing an obituary notice by yourself of our friend, the late Peter Warren Bell. Poor Bell was a good and staunch friend, and no one deplored his sad death[1] more than I.

To Mr. Rankin, a survivor amongst his old associates, he wrote not long before his death:

Grosvenor Square,
London,
July 15, 1913.

Your name brings back many pleasant recollections of a long while ago, when we saw so much of each other, and it would be a great gratification to me that we should come together again and have a long chat about Hudson's Bay matters and other things in which we are mutually interested.

I hope you may be visiting England before long, and pray feel assured that you will have a cordial welcome from my wife, Mrs. Howard, and myself, and all the members of our family circle.

To sum up, the old Company, as an entity possessing any real connection with the past, had been moribund for years, and its life flickered out altogether when Lord Strathcona died. For him the fiction was kept up; the old forms were maintained. But he knew it was all pretence. Behind the stately mask were the pert and simpering features of an enterprising draper. To show to what base uses the ancient

[1] He was drowned in British Columbia.

coat-of-arms, the boast of many generations of proud and sturdy wilderness adventurers, could be put, the following advertisement, which actually appeared with the coat-of-arms emblazoned on it, one amongst thousands, will suffice to show :

HUDSON'S BAY COMPANY.
Incorporated 1670.

A FEW WORDS ON MILLINERY

Mrs. B——, who has been with the Company for the past six years, still retains charge of the Department. The Company has secured the services of one of the best trimmers in the country, and a combination of Mrs. B——'s power of design and Miss M——'s ability in carrying the same into effect, will enable them, as usual, to offer for inspection a selection of the latest up-to-date millinery. The opening will take place on

TUESDAY, THE 24TH MARCH,

and following days.

Small hats and turbans, prettily trimmed with flowers, will have the lead for early spring wear.

As long as shirt-waists are worn, sailor hats will accompany them, and we have never before been able to offer the same variety in price and style.

Comment is superfluous.

This is the Hudson's Bay Company of to-day. Mrs. B—— and Miss M——, with their "powers of design" and their "shirt-waists," and the London shareholders with their 200 per cent. from the land won by those stern and rugged God-fearing pioneers, who laboured and suffered and won the heritage, this heritage whose descendants are, many of them, to-day dwelling in privation and penury.[1]

A Timon *you!* Nay, nay, for shame!
It looks too arrogant a jest—
The fierce old man—to take his name,
You bandbox. Off, and let him rest.

* * * * * *

The old Timon, with his noble heart
That strongly loathing, greatly broke.

(*Tennyson.*)

[1] In his will Lord Strathcona bequeathed £50 a year as an addition to the pensions of certain of his colleagues in the fur trade.

CHAPTER XXI

THE HIGH COMMISSIONERSHIP (1896-97)

AS a result of his intervention in the crisis dealt with in Chapter XIX, Sir Donald Smith had vastly enhanced his already high position in the country. The Bowell Administration, as we have seen, was in serious difficulties. Parliament would expire by effluxion of time in June, and it was clear that a great effort must be made by the Conservative party in the ensuing elections. A call had been issued, therefore, to the veteran Sir Charles Tupper to come over and help them. He had responded with alacrity.

Should he, or should he not, resign the High Commissionership? That was the question. A decision was soon taken. If his party won at the polls, Sir Charles would certainly enter office as Prime Minister, if he did not do so before; if his party lost, it was incredible that he would be continued in office as High Commissioner by the Liberals. Whom to appoint as his successor was a more difficult problem. Various names were canvassed. Meanwhile, Sir Charles, before leaving England, had been informed that the member for Montreal West would accept the post.

"When I heard Sir Donald Smith's name mentioned for the High Commissionership," declared Sir Mackenzie Bowell, "I confess I was surprised. 'He won't take it,' I said. However, I made the offer and it was accepted."

There were, indeed, some grounds for the then Prime Minister's surprise and incredulity. Sir Donald Smith was in his seventy-sixth year. He had led an unusually arduous life, frequently overtaxing his strength; he had acquired vast wealth, and was credited with a desire for rest and ease in retirement. No man then living in Canada could

look back on a more notable and successful career. He had, in fact, every excuse for retirement.

But the ways of destiny are inscrutable. For Donald Alexander Smith, when decrepitude has overtaken the generality of mankind, a fresh and more splendid career was dawning. All that he had done hitherto was to be eclipsed; all that he had been hitherto was to be forgotten. His world-wide fame and that great and prolonged service which was to make Canada his everlasting debtor, were both shrouded in the mists of futurity.

A close personal friend wrote to him in April:

> It is rumoured that you have been offered the High Commissionership in London. I hope it is not true that you have accepted the post. It would, in my opinion, be a fatal mistake—fatal to your peace of mind, to your health, and also to your fame and happiness. Moreover, it will prove to be but an empty honour, and your enforced retirement in a few months will surely follow. Mackenzie Bowell cannot possibly carry on, and Laurier will come in. If you accept, you are laying up a fresh sorrow for your old age. But, of course, you have thought of all that.

But, as we have seen, Sir Donald did accept, and was sworn in as High Commissioner and a Privy Councillor on April 24th, 1896.

The appointment drew forth the high commendation of both political parties. He was admittedly Canada's foremost citizen, and in his new sphere was expected to do much to assist in bringing the Colonies into closer touch with the Mother Country. His reputation and position in finance made him additionally *persona grata* in commercial circles. His acceptance of the High Commissionership would not, he found, affect his position as President of the Bank of Montreal and Governor of the Hudson's Bay Company.

The London *Daily Chronicle* said:

> Sir Donald Smith will make an almost ideal Canadian High Commissioner. He is the most large-hearted of Canadians, and though a nominal supporter of the Government now in power at Ottawa, he cares very little for party distinctions, and has probably as

many friends among the Liberals as among the Conservatives. He has abundant wealth, reaped in such enterprises as the railways which have opened up the Western States and the prairie regions of the Canadian North-West.

Other newspapers spoke in the same strain when welcoming the new Canadian representative, and he received numerous letters exhibiting the esteem in which he was held by many English friends. Nevertheless, it cannot be denied that to the masses in Britain Sir Donald Smith in 1896 was not even a name. Indeed, Canada herself was only on the threshold of that Imperial celebrity and material success which was soon to surround her.

"Who is this Sir *David* Smith who is to replace our old friend Tupper?" a usually well-informed ex-Cabinet Minister wrote to the Hon. Edward Blake, M.P.

To the varied illustrations of romance in the careers of notable men this also might be suggested—to begin climbing the highest ladder of fame at the age of seventy-five!

What, it may be asked, was the precise nature of the office to which Sir Donald had just been appointed?

Previous to 1880 Canada had been represented in the United Kingdom by a simple agent, Sir John Rose. Early in that year, Sir John Macdonald resolved to put the office of agent for Canada in London on a more satisfactory footing. An Act, therefore, was passed constituting the office of High Commissioner. In appointing Sir Alexander Galt to the post, certain definite instructions were formulated and approved by the Governor-General. He was also appointed chief emigration agent for Canada, and was informed of the Government's intention to transfer to him the entire management of the public debt and correspondence relating to the finances of the Dominion in London.

After a brief tenure of office Sir Alexander Galt was succeeded by Charles Tupper in 1884. Sir Charles—for all his qualities of manner, and knowledge, which made him an excellent representative of the country abroad—was, it must

be avowed, far too keen a politician, and followed far too ardently his instincts of combat, to be entirely acceptable to both political parties in Canada. Moreover, he continued, while holding the High Commissionership, to be a member of the Conservative Ministry, and was, therefore, a fair target for the shafts of the Opposition. One instance will suffice.

There was a proposal in 1891 to raise the emolument of the High Commissioner to the modest figure of $10,000. One member asked :

> Why should the High Commissioner, who lives in England, and who, however you may attempt to surround the fact with verbiage, holds a sinecure, have a salary larger than that of the hard-worked head of the Department ? What practical duties has the High Commissioner discharged during the last eight or ten years ?

Another actually proposed the abolition of the office, while yet another ironically declared :

> The Minister of Finance has sought to justify the continuance of the office of High Commissioner on the ground that he has performed great service in respect to the egg and poultry trade. The hon. gentleman has, however, undertaken a larger contract than even he is capable of performing if he seeks to convince the House that the spasmodic efforts of the High Commissioner with respect to the egg and poultry trade of this Dominion would justify the payment of $18,000[1] a year for the continuance of the office. The egg and poultry trade is a very important one, and its importance has always been recognised by the Opposition.

It is interesting to note the part Sir Donald Smith took in the debate. He said :

> The hon. gentleman has compared the emoluments of the High Commissioner with those of the First Minister and the other Ministers of the Crown. The hon. gentleman does not require to be informed that many representatives of European nations—those in Austria, in France, in Russia, in England—get much higher salaries than the Prime Minister in any of those countries ; and that is un-

[1] This included the cost of an official London residence in Cromwell Road. One of Sir Donald's first acts was to sell this house, which had greatly deteriorated in value.

doubtedly consistent with their position, representing as they do their Sovereign, as the High Commissioner for Canada represents the Dominion.

He continued :

While I have a proper idea of economy, I think that instead of putting it at $10,000 or $12,000, $20,000 would be by no means too much to pay—I am not speaking of an individual, but for the position of the representative of Canada in London. There are many demands made on any gentleman in that position, and I think it would be only showing a proper regard to the dignity and the position of Canada to make a worthy allowance for the High Commissioner.

The suggestion of $20,000 a year, in addition to a residence, rudely shocked the Opposition. One member declared :

Before the hon. gentleman startles us with such an extraordinary suggestion, he must be prepared to show that our condition in Canada is so essentially prosperous that we should be justified in moving in the direction of increasing the salaries of our hard-worked officials before we increase those of persons holding sinecures.

Another member declared that he had examined the authorities to ascertain what the United States of America paid their Ambassadors and Ministers abroad. While Canada virtually paid the High Commissioner $18,000 a year, the amount of salaries paid to the Ambassadors of the United States to France, Great Britain, Germany, and Russia was only $17,500. America only paid $12,000 a year to her Ministers to Austria, Brazil, China, Italy, Japan, Spain; to Turkey, Chili, Argentine Republic, U.S. of Colombia and Peru, $10,000; and to Persia, Portugal, and other smaller countries, $5,000. " So," it was added triumphantly, " our High Commissioner receives a larger salary than any of the Ambassadors of the United States to foreign countries."

Events and changes were to move forward rapidly to the time, twelve brief years later, when one of these very important American Ambassadors—no less important than

Mr. Whitelaw Reid—was to say publicly to an English audience :

I sometimes think that my office is magnified by your kindness into a greater than it would be otherwise, and my duties, more numerous here from the same cause, would sometimes overwhelm me if my spirit of emulation were not aroused by the constant spectacle of a rival. He, too, is an Ambassador of an English-speaking transatlantic country, in extent equalling my own, and advancing by rapid strides to wealth and importance second only to ourselves in the whole Western world. Wherever I go there is he, and to a great many functions I do not go, he does. Yet, great as is the country he represents, the Ambassador of the Dominion of Canada magnifies his office. Beside his indefatigable exertions, my own office is a sinecure.

It is only just to say that Canadian industrial and monetary conditions were at a comparatively low ebb in the early "nineties," and were the representative ever so persuasive or diligent, the attractions then offered by this country were dubious and few. Some there were even amongst those in high places who despaired of the future. How different was the temper of Sir Donald Smith! One of his earliest utterances as High Commissioner was at a banquet in connection with the Pacific Cable Conference in London, to which he was, with Sir Mackenzie Bowell, a delegate. Responding to a toast of "Canada," he began :

Sir Alexander Wilson has told you that it was a band of merchants who gave to England and the Empire the vast and good country of India. That was the band of Merchant Adventurers trading into Hudson's Bay. These men, two years after the East India Company was chartered, also obtained a charter. The whole of the eastern portion of Canada then belonged to the Crown of France. These merchant adventurers first entered Hudson's Bay. Then they spread themselves over the more northern portion of the continent. And what is the country now ? It is a very important part of the Dominion of Canada, and in years to come will be of still greater consequence to the Dominion and to the Empire.

It is in that country within the last year that a small number of farmers have produced no less than 30,000,000 bushels of wheat, and when that country becomes what it will in a very few years

become—with the assistance which we are sure to have from those whom we see here to-night and those who have come as delegates from all parts of Great Britain and the Empire—then that vast North-West of Canada will be settled by hundreds of thousands, and even millions, of British subjects.

Looking to the vast area of the wheat fields in that great North-West, and considering what has already been done in the way of wheat growth, we may look forward with assurance, and that in a short time, to the day when it will produce and send to England all the grain she may require. There are in Canada those who have as loyal hearts to Great Britain and the Empire as we find here at home.

A reference he then made to the Right Hon. Joseph Chamberlain was received with loud cheers:

We in Canada have the greatest satisfaction in knowing that there is at the present moment at the head of the Colonial Department one who has given his heart thoroughly to the work of making a great Empire and knitting together every part of the Empire, so that "Imperialism" shall be not merely a "movement," not simply a "flash in the pan," but that we shall continue steadily growing as an Empire of Englishmen, with the aspirations and determination of all to do their part in keeping their heritage intact and perpetuating its glories for all time. I may say for Canada that its Government and people will be foremost to come to the right hon. gentleman and ask him to take steps that there may be a gathering of the different parts of the Empire in England to devise some means of satisfying every portion of the Queen's dominions in respect of commerce and the intercourse between all parts of the Empire. We shall be only too glad to knit the bonds still closer with the great Empire of which we are proud.

His first notable public appearance as High Commissioner occurred in the early days of June at the Congress of Chambers of Commerce of the Empire, to which he was a delegate. Here he sounded for the first time that note of practical Imperialism which Joseph Chamberlain emitted with his latest breath. Sir Donald ardently hoped for preferential trade within the Empire. Political considerations, however, soon made his championship of the proposal incompatible with his tenure of a non-political office.

The Toronto Board of Trade had offered a resolution to which Sir Donald proposed the following amendment:

Whereas the stability and progress of the British Empire can be best assured by drawing continually closer the bonds that unite the Colonies with the Mother Country, and by the continuous growth of a practical sympathy and co-operation in all that pertains to the common welfare, and whereas this co-operation and unity can in no way be more effectually promoted than by the cultivation and extension of the mutual and profitable interchange of their products; therefore resolved—That this Congress records its belief in the advisability and practicability of a Customs arrangement between Great Britain and her Colonies and India on the basis of preferential treatment, and recommends that steps should be taken by Her Majesty's Government to bring about an interchange of opinions on the subject between the Mother Country and the other Governments of the Empire.

In the course of his speech Sir Donald remarked that in moving his amendment he did so in no spirit of opposition to the previous proposal of the Toronto delegation. On the contrary, he said:

I am, indeed, acting in unison with my friends from Toronto and other Canadian representatives. My object is to place before this Congress a resolution which represents, I hope, the views of all the Canadian delegates, and will receive their support, and thus render more or less unnecessary the discussion of the other resolutions of a similar nature which are on the paper. We hope, also, that the terms of the amendment are such as will commend themselves to our friends from Australasia, from South Africa, and the other Colonies, and we are not without hope that it may commend itself to the representatives of the commercial interests of the United Kingdom who are present to-day.

What we are striving for here is not the discussion of the details of a commercial arrangement between the Mother Country and the other Colonies. That must be left to the Government of the different parts of the Empire to formulate and arrange. What we want to do is to secure the acceptance by this Congress of the principle that has been in one way and another so ably advocated. It has also been discussed by the Canadian Parliament, by Boards of Trade and Chambers of Commerce in Canada, in South Africa and Australasia, and also in other Colonies.

But this amendment takes us further, and, the principle being conceded, Her Majesty's Government are to be requested to approach

the other Governments of the Empire with a view to the interchange of opinions on this important subject, which is very closely connected with the future development of the trade and commerce of this great Empire.

If Her Majesty's Government will grasp the matter boldly and invite an expression of opinion from the Governments of the Colonies, we are not without hope that it may lead to the calling together of another great Conference in London, where the details of a measure satisfactory to the Colonies and the United Kingdom might be discussed and arranged. . . .

I have already said that we do not want to enter into details. We do not wish to get into a discussion on abstract free trade or protection. We have other and higher objects to attain—the closer commercial unity of this great Empire; and those who run may read not only the issues that are at stake at the present time, but the very much greater issues that must make themselves apparent in the near future. I do not think there is anything in a moderate scheme of preferential treatment which need shock any reasonable economic theories, neither is it likely to lead to retaliation. We have as much right to treat trade within the Empire on a preferential basis as the various foreign countries with colonies have to give to and receive from their colonies preferential treatment.

Germany cannot reasonably object to such a proposition, neither can the United States, because they have adopted it already themselves, and the same remark applies to Norway and Sweden. Therefore, gentlemen, I commend this amendment very heartily and cordially to your acceptance. I am sure its adoption would cause much gratification in the Colonies, and I believe among no inconsiderable part of the population of the United Kingdom. It would also encourage Her Majesty's Government to take steps to secure a modification of those unlucky treaties with Belgium and Germany which, in their present form, block the way to any inter-Imperial arrangement.

This speech created an ineffaceable impression. Amongst those who listened to it was the late W. T. Stead, who wrote:

In the vigour, the youthful freshness, the massive head crowned by the glistening snows, I seemed to see the great Dominion of Canada incarnate, and in his language I heard the Canadian creed of hope, self-confidence, and loyalty.[1]

[1] Mr. A. G. Gardiner, editor of the *Daily News*, afterwards described Lord Strathcona as "Canada in a swallow-tail coat."

Mr. Chamberlain was amongst the first to congratulate the High Commissioner. They met frequently, both in public and privately, and a warm friendship sprang up between them.

Sir Donald went to Glasgow in the middle of June to take part in the celebration of his friend Lord Kelvin's jubilee. Canada had taken so prominent a part in the progress of ocean telegraphy that it was most fitting for her High Commissioner to do honour to the William Thompson whose investigations made possible the first Atlantic cable of 1858.

On the afternoon of Dominion Day the High Commissioner of Canada and Lady Smith gave their first reception, in celebration of the day, at the Imperial Institute. The guests numbered between five hundred and six hundred, and a feature of the occasion then, as afterwards, was the music supplied by Canadian musicians studying in Europe.

The elections in Canada were by this time taking place. Sir Mackenzie Bowell had previously yielded the Premiership to Sir Charles Tupper, who fought valiantly on the hustings to retain it. But the verdict of the country was against him, and, after eighteen years' exclusion, the Liberals returned to power.

There was much speculation as to what effect this would have on Sir Donald's retention of his office. Said the *World:*

> If Mr. Laurier has the interests of his country at heart he will make no change in the British High Commissionership. That office is now filled by a gentleman who, of all Canadians, is best qualified for the position. Sir Donald A. Smith is probably the best-known Colonial in London. He is in touch with all great movements in which Canada is interested. Furthermore, he is a man of wealth, and is thereby enabled to create an impression on the British public which another representative might not be able to effect.

But the new Canadian Prime Minister needed no prompting of this kind. He wrote at once to Sir Donald expressing his hope that the result of the elections would make no

A SCENE AT THE QUAYSIDE

Immigrants arriving in Canada in search of new homes

difference to the former's retention of the post. Here is the reply :

BROWN'S HOTEL, DOVER STREET, LONDON,
July 15, 1896.

MY DEAR MR. LAURIER,—Your most kind letter of the 3rd July I had the pleasure of receiving to-day, only in time to send a line in acknowledgment by this morning's mail and to thank you, which I do very heartily for it.

Although a Liberal-Conservative, an independent one in the fullest sense of the word, it affords me much gratification, as one who was happy to count you a personal friend, to congratulate you on the result of the elections, as I had the most complete confidence that the best interests of your country would in every way be safe in your hands.

I have a very pleasant and grateful recollection of the assurance you were good enough to give me in March, that of your utmost aid in disposing satisfactorily of the vexed questions of Manitoba Schools, which, had it been properly handled, was capable of settlement long ago. You may feel assured that if in any way I can assist in arriving at a result so much to be wished for, my best services will always be at your command.

I write in much haste, but believe me to be, etc.,

DONALD A. SMITH.

On the same day he was summoned to Windsor Castle to a private investiture, and received the order of the Knight Grand Cross of the Order of St. Michael and St. George, of which order he had been a member for ten years. On July 18th he sailed for Canada in company with Sir Mackenzie Bowell, his late colleague in the Pacific Cable conference.

Before leaving Canada again for London he added another to the magnificent series of benefactions, which he had already conferred on Montreal, in the splendid gift of the Royal Victoria College for the Higher Education of Women. The establishment of this institution introduced a new feature into Montreal university life—a feature which has very great attractions for the majority of students, and which has long been looked upon as a desideratum by a large proportion of university men. The Victoria College was to be essentially a residential institution, as are the

colleges of the British universities, having only subsidiary arrangements for teaching apart from those which its students would enjoy as members of the university.

Great care was exercised to have the interior appointments of Victoria College as nearly perfect as possible. The building was six storeys in height, and included, in addition to the convocation hall, classrooms and residential quarters, a gymnasium, reading-room and library for the "Donaldas" (as the women students on the Donald A. Smith Foundation were already known). It was expected that the building would be ready at the beginning of the autumn session of the following year. Queen Victoria accorded her sanction to the title, and the college was under her patronage.

Sir Donald's visit to Canada was brief. On August 8th he was back in London, to resume his duties as High Commissioner, having in the intervening three weeks twice crossed the Atlantic and transacted important business at Ottawa and Montreal. Soon after his arrival he left to pass four or five days at his new country seat in Scotland. After this his duties as lecturer and interpreter of Canada in Great Britain began in earnest.

If the statistics into which he was prone to launch seem trite now to some of us, let it be remembered they were not so then. Vast audiences, comprising intelligent and well-informed men and women, listened spell-bound to his recital of the advantages Canada offered to the immigrant. To-day we may smile—Europe knows the story well; but how fresh and attractive it seemed in 1896!

At this time the great crying need of Canada was more people. "Without people," the High Commissioner declared, "we can do nothing. All our resources are lying fallow—all our talents are hidden under a bushel." "Get population," Mr. Chamberlain told the Canadians, "and all else shall be added unto you."

Lord Strathcona set himself, therefore, to find the people,

and into this truly Herculean task of filling up the Canadian North-West he flung himself with a passion extraordinary in one of his years. The apathy of the British people he was determined to destroy; he was determined to counteract the tendency of emigrants to travel to America. And so he went up and down the country, preaching indefatigably the gospel of what has been called the "ameliorating re-distribution of the British peoples."

His success in this task is the measure of the debt owed him to-day by the Canadian nation—and especially the North-West.

So far back as 1880 Sir John Macdonald wrote:

> The development of this country, if left to Canadian resources alone, must necessarily be extremely slow. It is manifestly beyond the means of such a limited population as Canada now possesses either themselves to furnish the population required to fill up the North-West or the capital necessary for its development. Emigration on a large scale, and precisely of that character which is most likely to take place from the United Kingdom, is essential; and it may be urged with much reason that the transference of a large body of the suffering people of Great Britain and Ireland to the wheat fields of Manitoba and the North-West will directly benefit the United Kingdom much more than the settled Provinces of the Confederation, and will indirectly prove of still further advantage by creating for goods a new class of customers the products of whose industry are precisely those which are most essential for the independence of the United Kingdom for her food supplies.

In that year the Ottawa Government was actually prepared to consider a plan of systematic emigration, whereby Canada on her side would assume the entire charge for the civil government of the country and the maintenance of law and order, furnishing free land for all the incoming population, and asking from the Imperial Government only its assumption of a reasonable proportion of the cost of the railway and of the advances which would be required in assisting emigration on a large scale. Advances could be secured upon the lands reserved for sale by the Government in aid of the cost of construction of the Pacific Railway or

upon the farms occupied by the emigrants, or upon both, and the Imperial assistance to the railway might be defined and limited to its satisfaction.

But all this is a thing of the past. It shows, however, to what lengths the Canadian Government, with what Mr. Goldwin Smith had called a " white elephant on its hands," was then prepared to go. Although the Canadian Pacific Railway had long been built, and the agricultural potentialities of the country had been tried and found to be fertile even beyond the early expectations, still the tide of emigration was to the south of the British line—still the intending British emigrant persisted in regarding Canada as a land of snow and ice and outside the range of his choice of a future home. Lord Strathcona recalled the enormous emigration to Canada of the " thirties " and " forties."

" I am astonished," he said, " when I think of the conditions prevailing that so many should have emigrated then and so few now." In a letter written in 1896, he said that the Canadian Government attached the greatest possible importance to the resources and capabilities of the Dominion becoming better known and understood in the United Kingdom than they are at present, and that a similar feeling prevailed among the 5,000,000 of Her Majesty's subjects who formed the population of its different provinces.

All of his emigration addresses were of an eminently practical character, conveying exactly the kind of information that a farmer or working man would find useful if he harboured any thought of emigration to Canada. He spoke of the immense acreage awaiting cultivation, and of the crops that could be grown. He told of the climate; of the remarkable development of railways and canals; of the excellent banking system; of mines and minerals, second to none in the world; of the cosmopolitan character of the population; of the educational institutions; and of Canada's

desire to develop trade with the United Kingdom and draw more closely the bonds of affection that attached her to the Empire. His public addresses were those of a Canadian proud of his country, and anxious to do it service.

Early in January he was present at a banquet to his friend Sir Charles Tupper, who, in the course of his speech, uttered that panegyric of his successor in office to which allusion has been made elsewhere.[1]

> Canada now has the good fortune to have as High Commissioner Sir Donald Smith, a gentleman who possesses to an infinitely greater degree than either of his predecessors the confidence—("No, no")—yes—I say it advisedly—he possesses, and deservedly possesses, the confidence of both parties in Canada to an extent to which I could never make the slightest claim. And you will readily understand why, when—without mentioning his other great claims to public confidence—I say that the *magnum opus* of Canada, the Canadian Pacific Railway, would have no existence to-day, notwithstanding all that the Government did to support that undertaking, had it not been for the indomitable pluck and energy and determination, both financially and in every other respect, of Sir Donald Smith.

Lord Strathcona used to say that no tribute ever paid him gave him greater pleasure than this from his former travelling companion over the desolate, snow-clad prairies to Fort Garry a generation before.

Naturally, the project of a line of steamers running from Britain to a port in Hudson's Bay, and there connecting with a railway serving the North-West, had much personal interest for Sir Donald. His dictum on the subject deserves to be quoted:

> At first blush I should say its commercial practicability was not possible. But if my long life and experience have taught me anything, it is this—everything is possible. What man has done, man can do. There is no project so fantastic—there is no scheme of transportation so extravagant—at which I would now laugh, or which I am not disposed to believe, in capable hands, possible and even highly successful.

[1] *See* p. 419.

This recalls the story that on one occasion Lady Strathcona exclaimed: "Really—I could no more do such a thing than I could fly."

"But, my dear," observed her husband quietly, "we can *all* fly now, if we choose."

An application made by the promoter of the Hudson's Bay route to the British Government for its co-operation in investigating the possibilities of the scheme had been rejected. Sir Donald wrote again to Mr. Goschen, in February, urging him to reconsider his decision:

> It is a fact that the previous expeditions are not regarded as conclusive by many in Canada, and especially by a large number of the inhabitants of Manitoba and the North-West Territories, who are fully impressed with the belief that navigation is practicable for at least several months of the year in Hudson's Bay and Straits.
>
> You will readily understand, therefore, the desire that exists that the question should be investigated in a very thorough manner, in order that the practicability of the new route or otherwise may be satisfactorily demonstrated. This result is more likely to be achieved with the co-operation of Her Majesty's Government than without it.
>
> If the route, even with specially constructed steamers, should prove to be practicable for a sufficient time each year to encourage commercial enterprise, it would be of importance to Manitoba and the North-West Territories, and also to the exporters and importers of the United Kingdom. The North-West Territories and Manitoba promise to afford a large market for British produce, and their capacity is great for raising food supplies of various kinds which are so largely imported into Great Britain.
>
> Therefore, in view of all these circumstances, I hope you will be so kind as to reconsider the question, and I trust, after consultation with your colleague, some means may be found of co-operating with the Canadian Government in the proposed investigation, not only by deputing an officer to accompany the expedition, but by sharing in the expenses that will necessarily have to be incurred.

But the British Government again declined; and ultimately the investigation was made by Canada. The result was the commencement of the Hudson's Bay railway.

One of the matters which, on the threshold of the Jubilee

year, gave Sir Donald great concern was the fate of the Imperial Institute, which, with a mighty blare of trumpets, had promised to accomplish such a great work for the Imperial idea. The splendid building had only been open four or five years, and now already appeared to be threatened with bankruptcy. The amount derived from the endowment fund just sufficed to pay the rates and taxes and the interest on the debt. For the rest, the Institute had only its modest subscription list as an assured income; and the balance of its working expenses had to be made out of colonial contributions and what it could raise by catering for the general public as a place of recreation and amusement.

To Sir Wilfrid Laurier, Lord Strathcona, in March, 1897, wrote:

> You will see that Mr. Labouchere says that "the history of the Institute is a monument of reckless extravagance, purposeless effort, and incompetent administration." It is a great pity, because I believe it could still, in other hands, fulfil its purpose.

At the end of March he proceeded to Ottawa and there consulted the Government on the matter. He then wrote to Sir Wilfrid:

> So far as Canada is concerned, we are not getting from the Institute the results which we ought to expect. This arises a good deal from the lukewarm interest that appears to be taken in the matter in Canada.
>
> Ontario, Quebec, and Manitoba—and perhaps British Columbia—have a fair collection of products, but nothing like what might be sent if the effort was made. New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island take no part in the Institute at all; they have no collection, and hitherto have refused to pay any money.
>
> The North-West Territories have hitherto paid their share of the bills, but have sent over no exhibits. The same remark applies very much to Nova Scotia. The exhibits could be made of much more use if the whole expenditure was provided by the Canadian Government, and the Canadian Court managed from the High Commissioner's office.
>
> What we have to consider before doing anything on the lines

suggested is—what is going to be the future of the Institute? It is very evident unless the finances are placed in a more satisfactory condition the Institute must collapse.

With Lord Herschel (who is Chairman of the Institute) I had some conversation on the subject just before I left England, and he appeared to think that if the present difficulties could be tided over for a few years the Institute would come into an annual sum from the Commission of the Exhibition of 1851, which would put it on a solid basis. Meantime, however, its condition is far from being satisfactory.

It is interesting to learn now that he at one time discussed the practicability of buying the Imperial Institute outright and reorganising it on a new basis. He was not deterred by the expense as by a doubt whether the expenditure would be justified by its usefulness.

On March 10th Sir Donald departed on the *Teutonic* on another brief visit to Canada to consult with Dominion Ministers, and especially with the Hon. Clifford Sifton, the new Minister of the Interior, on the all-important subject of the immigration policy of the Administration.

The sensational gold discoveries in the Klondyke were rapidly proving the long desired magnet for immigrants. On every hand one heard of the "rush to the Klondyke," and the stirring incidents of the great California mining boom of 1849 were about to be re-enacted.

Sir Donald wrote in March, 1897:

The world has taken a long time to find out the mineral wealth of the Yukon district. I recall many old Hudson's Bay pioneers telling of the gold there nearly half a century ago, and it was reported to the Company far longer ago than that, but it was not then considered to be in their line.

CHAPTER XXII

THE ANNUS MIRABILIS (1897)

TO the students of British political history the year 1897 will ever mark an era in the relations of the United Kingdom and the Oversea Dominions. In the short space of ten years which had elapsed since the celebration by the British people of the Jubilee of Queen Victoria's reign, the whole Imperial outlook had changed. Conditions at home and abroad had altered. Whosoever takes the pains to explore the annals of that decade will be struck by the new mood of Imperial sentiment which now swept over the whole Empire. Representatives of the Colonies, it is true, had visited England, unofficially, in 1887, but for the temper, the spirit and the knowledge with which they were then received, one has only to glance at the best newspapers of the period and read the well-meant but patronising speeches which were delivered on many notable occasions.

Ten years later the Speaker of the Canadian House of Commons, Hon. J. D. Edgar, could write thus:

> The Jubilee celebration of 1897 has either caused or elicited an Imperial sentiment the strength of which was never before displayed or suspected.
>
> Was it a little thing that, as a pledge of kinship and love, the greatest of all commercial powers denounced two of her most important commercial treaties in order to help Canada to draw nearer to her?
>
> Assuredly a new epoch has at last come in the world's history when the discovery has been made that a parent nation can bind a colony closer to her by striking off all its fetters, and can win its enduring loyalty by a gift of the broadest freedom.

Thus spoke Sir Donald Smith:

> The Colonies are taking a prominent position in the United Kingdom this year. Their status in the Empire has at last been recognised.

They have been invited for the first time to participate in a national celebration. They will share in the rejoicings of the occasion of the sixtieth anniversary of Her Majesty's reign. Their military and police forces will be represented in the royal procession, and their Prime Ministers will be the guests of the Imperial Government. Let us hope that their great gathering may lead to a closer union among the family nations, all under one flag and owning allegiance to one Sovereign, which make up the British Empire.

In ten years the British Empire had, indeed, moved notably, and the most marked progress had been made by Canada. Canada was the acknowledged leader amongst the Dominions overseas. We have noted several causes contributing to enhance her prestige. We have seen, after a period of stagnation, an enfeebled government overthrown and a new administration, at the head of which was a French-Canadian of great personal distinction and eloquence, of whom as yet little was known and everything was hoped, upon the scene.

It was in the spring of this year that the question of the fiscal relations between Canada and the United Kingdom came almost dramatically to the forefront in Imperial politics. In April there came the Fielding Tariff Law, by which preferential treatment was accorded to Great Britain unconditionally. Thus a great and momentous step was taken towards Imperial union. It lent the British advocates of Tariff Reform a practical basis from which to launch their policy; although in Canada it was a step rather towards the Free Trade long promised by the Liberal Party.

But before the preference could go into effect the treaties with Germany and Belgium had to be denounced by Great Britain, and this was later agreed to. The announcement of the Fielding Tariff, according preference to British goods and denouncing the existing treaty with Germany, thrilled the whole Empire, evoking from Mr. Kipling the lines:

> Daughter am I in my mother's house,
> But mistress in mine own,

in which Canada proclaimed her commercial independence.

Lord Northcliffe's Influence

It is not too much to say that England's interest in the visit of the Premiers largely centred upon the picturesque figure of Sir Wilfrid Laurier. This interest now began to be warmly stimulated by the newspapers. Into London journalism had recently leapt a new force; the lethargic, the oracular, and the dull had been forced to make way in popular esteem to the sprightliness, vigour, and brilliancy of youth.

The career of Mr. Alfred Harmsworth, afterwards Lord Northcliffe, will offer a curious study to future historians and philosophers. For a long period his volatility merely entertained the serious minded. It is now recognised that his influence has been profound and far-reaching.

It is too soon to appraise the part he has played in the policies and national habits of thought and action in England for the last twenty years. Nevertheless, a shrewd American observer, the late John Hay, once gave it as his opinion that modern British Imperialism, as a popular force, was largely the joint production of four men—Joseph Chamberlain, Lord Strathcona, Rudyard Kipling, and Lord Northcliffe.

My own intimate connection with the then Mr. Harmsworth dates from the beginning of 1895, before he had yet ventured either into politics or daily journalism. In the spring of 1896 he founded the *Daily Mail,* and with that paper I became editorially associated.

As a Canadian dwelling at the heart of the Empire and responsive to Canadian activities and aspirations, I naturally endeavoured to secure Mr. Harmsworth's interest in anything which would be an advantage in making Canada and her affairs figure a little more prominently in the public eye.

From the first, Sir Donald, with whom I had many conversations on the subject, agreed with me in thinking that one cause of the little knowledge concerning Canada possessed by the average Englishman was the paucity of

Canadian news in the British Press. Canada was a land of snow, and Montreal was rarely mentioned, save in connection with her annual ice-palace.

Sir Donald put it in this way in a letter which he wrote to Mr. Laurier in August, 1896:

> You are aware, I think, that very little Canadian news finds its way into English newspapers. This arises largely from competition having ceased between Reuter's and Dalziel's agencies. The latter is practically non-existent, and the former for some years past seem to have been restricting their expenditure, so far as Canadian news is concerned. Then, again, none of the papers, with the exception of the *Times*, have any correspondents in Canada who send telegraphic information. In fact, the *Times* is the only paper in which Canadian news appears at all regularly. In the other papers it is only telegrams about things of a startling or morbid nature which appear to obtain publicity. . . .
>
> Naturally I look upon the matter largely from the advertisement point of view. To have Canada and Canadians' news of a desirable nature appearing frequently in the English papers would be great use to us. It would help emigration, it would help the extension of trade, and would be beneficial from every point of view. . . .
>
> It occurs to me that it would be most useful to me as High Commissioner for Canada, and as the representative of the Dominion in this country, to receive from you once or twice a week, or even a little more frequently, should it be necessary or desirable, telegrams informing me of anything that may be happening in the Dominion of an interesting nature and illustrating the progress of the country. . . .
>
> I commend the matter to your consideration, and shall be glad if you will let me know what you think of my proposal at your convenience.

Having introduced Mr. Harmsworth to the High Commissioner, I proposed to the former that I should tour the Dominion from ocean to ocean for the *Daily Mail*, and by a series of articles endeavour to set forth our resources in an attractive light for the enormous public his newspaper already commanded. He at once acceded, greatly to Sir Donald Smith's satisfaction, and the fruits of a protracted journey from Newfoundland to the Pacific continued to appear under the title of "Our Western Empire" in the

Daily Mail into the spring of 1897. Sir Donald very kindly wrote me that these articles had "popularised Canada to a most gratifying extent." On my return to London I was happily enabled to play the rôle of *avant courier* to Hon. Mr. Laurier, the new and then personally unknown Prime Minister of the Dominion.

There are many episodes of that *annus mirabilis* which are far less suggestive than the one I am about to relate. Hearing that a little private entertainment of the visiting First Ministers of the Colonies had been planned, Mr. Harmsworth, at my suggestion, resolved upon giving a large party at his London residence in Berkeley Square.

His newspapers, meanwhile, led the way by giving prominence to the personality and every circumstance connected with the approaching visit of the oversea notabilities. On June 2nd, I addressed the following to the High Commissioner:

I hasten to acknowledge your kind note of yesterday. Mr. Harmsworth and I needed no assurance of your warm co-operation. This is to be a great Colonial year—it will not be our fault if it is not also a great *Canadian* year.

Mr. Laurier sails to-day by the *Lucania*. He will, of course, take precedence amongst the overseas Premiers, not only by reason of Canada's status, but because of his own personality. Ought not we Canadians to give him an especially cordial welcome, not only in London, but on his arrival in Liverpool? I suggested to Mr. Archer Baker that a party of us travel down and meet the *Lucania* in Liverpool harbour next Wednesday. He approved heartily of this, but thought it essential you should be of the party.

Please let me know your opinion of this little plan.

Unluckily, on the very day this letter was written, Sir Donald was attacked by one of those violent colds to which he was constitutionally subject, and a verbal message came to me that he was confined to his bed. Under the circumstances, it was thought wiser not to press him to accompany the party of Canadians from London.

Arrangements were made for a steam tug and a small

brass band of five musicians to meet the *Lucania* at the entrance of Liverpool Harbour, on the 10th. Alas, however, difficulties arose. The weather threatened, and there was grave doubt of the exact time of the steamer's arrival. It might be midnight, and the tug might loiter about the harbour for twenty-four hours. The threatened ordeal was not too severe for Young Imperialism, but it was unacceptable to the musicians and also to the master of the vessel, who imposed conditions which, we thought, could not prudently be fulfilled. Therefore, reluctantly, the welcome by water was abandoned.

On June 7th I received the following from Sir Donald Smith :

> Ever since the receipt of your kind note of the 2nd, I have been practically laid up from the effects of a severe cold which still hangs over me, but if you can make it convenient to call at my office, 17, Victoria Street, between 11 and 12 to-morrow morning I shall be very glad of the opportunity of talking over with you the matter referred to by you, of a special and cordial welcome to the Hon. Mr. Laurier, our Dominion Premier.
>
> I, and, let me add, all Canadians, will greatly appreciate the warm interest taken by Mr. Harmsworth and yourself in this.

When I duly explained to the High Commissioner that the Liverpool scheme had been abandoned, he seemed disappointed.

"I had been thinking," he said, "what a splendid surprise it would be, and had made up my mind that the little sea trip would do me good. However, I suppose you are right."

Of the welcome given by London to Canada's Premier, Sir Wilfrid had no reason to complain. It was a perpetual pageant. The First Ministers of the other Colonies arrived and took up their quarters in the Hotel Cecil as royal guests. They were waited on by servants in the royal livery. Royal carriages were at their bidding. No wonder that some of these Colonial dignitaries were a little dazzled

by the brilliancy of their welcome! For the first time in their lives they felt the full force of being representative, for their personalities and achievements alike were unknown. Their carriages wound their way hither and thither, the newspapers chronicled the most trifling actions of the Colonial notabilities. British officialdom called and left their cards.

But until June 21st the Prime Ministers were socially *nominus et praeterea nihil*. London society held aloof from any practical demonstration. To invite to their drawing-rooms and dinner-tables colonists of whom nothing personally was known was too revolutionary of etiquette. They would smile benignly; they would even condescend to wave their dainty handkerchiefs, but not yet would they throw wide the portals of their houses in Mayfair and Belgravia.

This was Mr. Harmsworth's opportunity. He took full advantage of it. Some fifteen hundred invitations were issued to the leaders of London society, ambassadors, prominent Members of Parliament, leading barristers, and well-known actors, to a reception "to meet the Colonial Premiers."

Certain Colonial Office officials, regarding the proceeding as very irregular and even impertinent, took prompt but, as they thought, effectual means for turning it into a fiasco. For the reception of which all London was now talking, "to meet the Premiers," would be absurd without the presence of the Premiers. Before, therefore, it was possible to alter the date it was announced that Her Majesty the Queen had commanded the Premiers to a reception at Buckingham Palace!

On hearing this, Sir Donald Smith wrote to me:

I sympathise with you most unfeignedly, but I really do not see what remedy there can be. It is most unfortunate, but you may rest assured that Mr. Chamberlain was not concerned in the matter, which is entirely out of his control.

Sir Donald then shared our suspicions, but we had no proof until some time afterwards of their correctness, that this was a deliberate attempt to frustrate the Harmsworth party, by way of administering a rebuke to what was called Mr. Harmsworth's "pushful Imperialism." I remember Sir Donald's quiet laugh as he said: "I am afraid I also am laying myself open to the charge of pushful Imperialism."

It is needless to say that the Queen was wholly ignorant of these graceless machinations.

Mr. Laurier was quite as much chagrined at our threatened predicament as we were. I sought him out and explained the position to him.

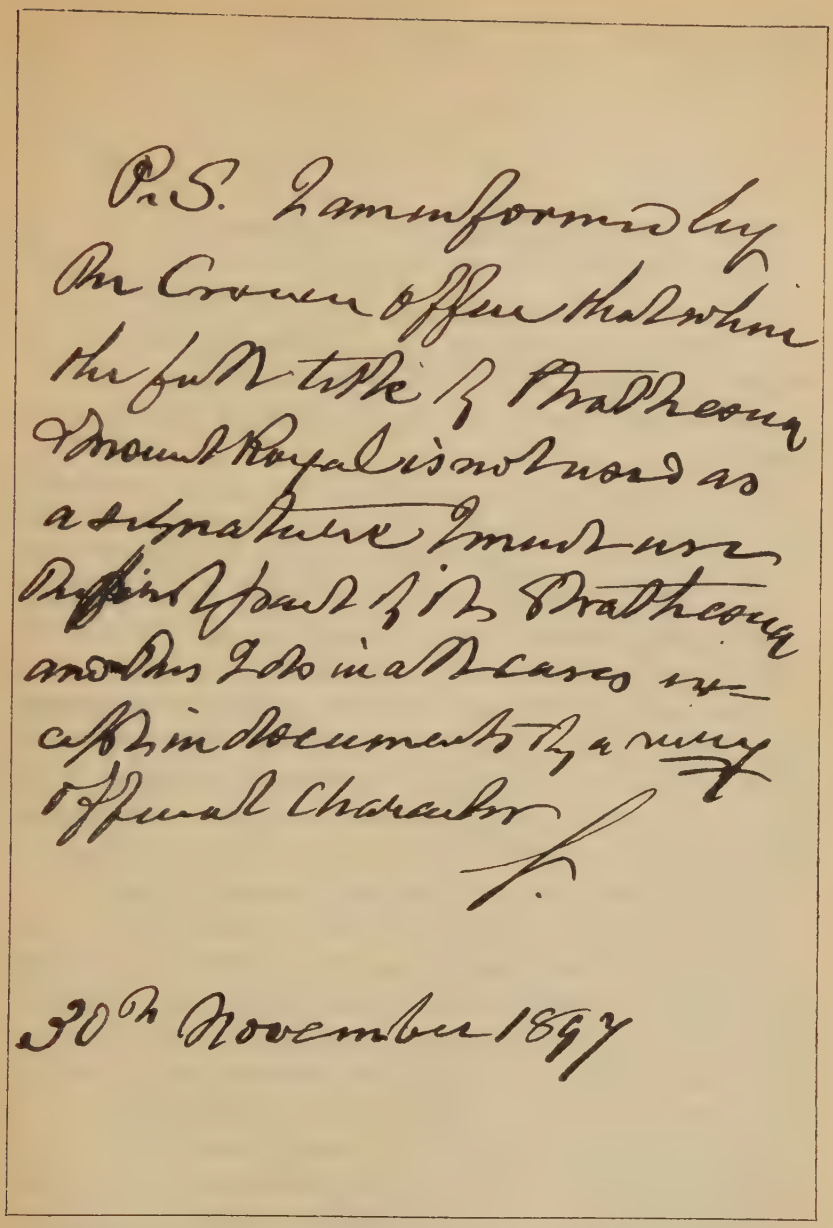
"If," I urged, "this function at Buckingham Palace does not last till midnight, will you come to Berkeley Square on the twenty-first?"

"Certainly," he replied promptly. "I will come if it lasts till past midnight," adding generously: "Moreover, I will endeavour to induce my fellow-Premiers to come the moment we can get away without infringing etiquette."

The evening arrived—the mansion in Berkeley Square was crowded with one of those brilliant assemblages which illustrate a London season. Soon after ten o'clock the royal carriages began to arrive in quick succession, and a series of individuals resplendent in new laced coats, knee-breeches and cocked hats, and each wearing a sword, crossed the threshold. The circumstance of the Windsor uniform, which would otherwise have been impossible, added much to the *éclat* of the occasion. Sir Donald afterwards spoke to me of the general sensation produced by the arrival and announcement of "The Honourable Mr. Wilfrid Laurier, Prime Minister of Her Majesty's Dominion of Canada."

Such was the popular *début* in London of a statesman who became as familiar and welcome a figure at Imperial reunions as any in the galaxy of statesmen from overseas.

The evening was not to pass without a further episode. By special messenger I received from Sir Donald a copy


P.S. I am informed by the Crown Office that when the full title of Strathcona & Mount Royal is not used as a signature I must use my first Christ & Surname and this I do in all cases in documents by a way of Official Character

30th November 1897

Facsimile of the postscript to a letter written by Lord Strathcona respecting his signature

of the *London Gazette,* damp from the press. It was then possible to make to the assembled company the following announcement:

To be a Peer of the United Kingdom, Sir Donald Alexander Smith, K.C.M.G.

And this other:

To be a Grand Cross of the Order of St. Michael and St. George, Honourable Wilfrid Laurier.

To Canada's Prime Minister I turned with the *Gazette* in my hands, proud to offer my congratulations, and to be the first to address him as "Sir Wilfrid."

Sir Donald acknowledged my congratulations in a letter thus:

You are indeed very kind to write in the manner you have done concerning the high honour Her Hajesty has been pleased to bestow upon my unworthy self. I regard it as one, not so much paid to me as to Canada, and I think it will generally and properly be so regarded.

There later ensued some difficulty in the choice of a title for the new peer. Having purchased the interesting Scottish estate of Glencoe, he had at first contemplated that of Baron Glencoe, but a sentimental local opposition developed with which he himself rather sympathised. The title of Montreal had been conceded to Earl Amherst. A compromise was effected. Glencoe—the glen or valley of Conan has its approximate Gaelic equivalent in *Strath cona.*

Not until August, on the eve of his departure for Canada, was the High Commissioner gazetted "A Baron of the United Kingdom by the name, style, and title of Baron Strathcona and Mount Royal, of Glencoe, in the county of Argyll, and of Mount Royal, in the province of Quebec and Dominion of Canada."[1] Like Lord Mount-Stephen, Sir Donald Smith thus effected in his new title a happy blending of Scottish and Canadian associations.

[1] P.S.—I am informed by the Crown officers that when the full title of Strathcona and Mount Royal is not used as a signature I must use the first part of it, Strathcona, and this I do in all cases except in documents of a *very* officia character.—*Letter* from Lord Strathcona, November 30th, 1897.

Raised to the Peerage

The Montreal *Star* declared:

That Canada's new Peer has chosen "Mount Royal" as one of his titles will rejoice all Canadians who live under the shadow of the Mount itself. . . . Mount Royal looks down on many a memento of the Baron's long kindness and practical philanthropy. The Royal Hospital, which was the gift to the city of her two peers, lies just at its foot, and a little to the right are the grounds of McGill, which no one can visit without being reminded of the generosity of Sir Donald—for as "Sir Donald" Montreal learned to love him, and hard it will be to think of him under a new name.

* * * * * *

When Lord Strathcona sailed for Canada, a peer of the realm, he was supposed in many quarters to be on the point of retirement from the High Commissionership. Frequent were the references to gentlemen who were prepared to succeed him. A proposition was put forward that upon the conclusion of the Earl of Aberdeen's term as Governor-General, Lord Strathcona should be appointed his successor.

One organ of public opinion strongly advocated the appointment. Canadians, irrespective of party, taking pride in his character and career, would like to see him at Rideau Hall. His claims were, it reasoned, of an exceptional character, and he would take rank with the most distinguished subjects of Her Majesty who have filled the position.

But Lord Strathcona would not hear of such a proposal. In his opinion it would "wholly subvert the happy arrangement which had existed, and ought always to exist, between the central political authority and the outlying parts. The Governor-Generalship having always been held by a non-Canadian, was a material factor in cementing the relations between the Dominion and the Mother Country."

He disapproved strongly even of the appointment of Lieutenant-Governors from the same province. When I once mentioned to him that a certain politician had been appointed to the gubernatorial chair in his own province, he said: "A good man but a great pity. If they had sent

him West he could better have done justice to himself. His local antecedents will hamper him."

That aspect of his peerage which pleased him most was his becoming a member of the Imperial Parliament. He liked to think of himself as a pioneer of the future band of Canadian representatives at Westminster. Yet he recognised the difficulties in the way.

> The idea of Colonial representation in the councils of the Empire is a pleasing one to the Englishmen, and any feasible scheme will be eagerly welcomed. There are, of course, many difficulties with which to contend. There is the question of taxation. Taxation without representation is objectionable ; but representation without taxation is hardly possible, and it is difficult to say how far the people of the Colonies would be willing to contribute to an Imperial fund.

He recognised that there was much useful " spade work " to be done. The Mother Country and Canada must be drawn together gradually by the force of common interests, they must achieve a unity which would make them mutually necessary. The constitutional changes would then come simply and easily.

On his return to England in September he plunged anew into his official duties. Each day these grew in magnitude. Beside the ordinary routine, involving the dispatch of hundreds of letters and giving personal interviews to callers, there were several large schemes which he had much at heart. At this time the chief amongst these was the long canvassed plan of a " Fast Atlantic Service " by which steamers would make the voyage from the British Isles to a Canadian port in five or six days.

For many years past, the liners running to Canadian ports, or carrying both mails and passengers, had had imminent over their heads the threat of a fast and heavily subsidised mail service of which they might or might not be the providers. One company complained :

> It is impossible to imagine anything more paralysing or repressive of enterprise than the policy which the Canadian authorities have

followed. While larger and faster steamers have been provided for the New York passenger service, the steamship lines to Canada have been practically compelled to mark time, not knowing what was to be done.

There were difficulties about making terms with the Messrs. Allan or the Dominion or Beaver lines. But the prospect that the British Government would also assist with a large subsidy tempted an enterprising contractor named Peterson to come forward with an offer to operate such a steamship system line.

In this connection Lord Strathcona addressed the following letter to Sir Wilfrid Laurier :

As shown by my official letters of to-day and cable message to your address of the 25th and 28th September, I have not been idle since my return from Canada in the matter of the Fast Atlantic Service.

My cable message of to-day advises you that Peterson, Tate & Co. have paid into the Bank of Montreal here ten thousand pounds, the cash guarantee required of them in connection with their contract.

Mr. Peterson has been with me to-day, and on my pointing out to him that securities for a further sum of £10,000 must be lodged, he assured me that this would be forthcoming within the next few days, and I think we may count on this being carried out. There appears to be every reasonable expectation that he will be able to form a company with the required capital, but it will take some time yet before he can complete his arrangements, and until he has secured five directors to whom no objection can be taken and that the whole of the capital wanted has actually been underwritten by men or firms of undoubted financial standing, I cannot recommend that your Government should be directly represented on the Board, nor until then would it be wise in my opinion to approach Mr. Chamberlain on the subject, with a view of having a director representing the Imperial Government. Mr. Chamberlain is at present in Switzerland, but he is expected back soon.

You may feel assured that there will be every effort on my part to push the matter on to a satisfactory conclusion, but to insure success we must see that every step taken is in the right direction, and it is a decided gain that Peterson is to complete his deposit without availing himself of the sixty days before doing so.

But it soon appeared that Mr. Peterson desired more definite backing from the Government and from Lord

Strathcona himself. This raised many difficulties and—as Sir Wilfrid Laurier explained in a letter on November 9th—needed very careful consideration :

The matter of the Fast Atlantic Service, we think, has reached a point at which some definite conclusion one way or the other must be taken.

Mr. Peterson has been asking us recently to agree to two different things. First, that Milford Haven should be the terminus, and, second, that you should be on the Board of Directors of the Company.

With regard to the first demand concerning Milford Haven, this is a point which must be left for further consideration, whenever everything else has been settled ; as to your going on the Board, this is a matter which has to be very carefully considered. It seems that unless something is done to help him, Peterson is now powerless and cannot carry out his contract. It also looks as if, unless you undertake yourself to pull him through, the matter must fail. The question is now whether it would be too great an undertaking to ask you practically to organise the company and make it a success. If it were to be a failure ultimately, would you not think that the investors would hold the Government responsible for having allowed the Company to have the encouragement of the presence on the Board of the High Commissioner ? In other words, we think that it would not be advisable for you to accept a position on the Board unless your judgment is clear that the whole scheme is to turn out well financially, not only for the Government of Canada but for the investors also. Unless you are satisfied of that, we think it better to press the matter to a conclusion and let the contract drop. There has been too much procrastination already. We have lost one season. It is time that we should be prepared to put the matter in such a shape as not to lose another.

The jubilation over the fast line was premature. It became clear that the projector could not carry out his contract.

The position for Lord Strathcona was an awkward one, but he was not without good hopes that a fast Atlantic service might still be arranged for on reasonable terms.

For the present, however, the proposition was shelved.

Lord Strathcona expressed the utmost sympathy for Mr. Peterson, whom he regarded as a honourable man, who did his utmost to fulfil his promise. He wrote :

It was too much for him, but this does not mean that it would be too much for every man. I received a letter shortly before I left England from one of the partners in a large shipbuilding firm, who has no interest one way or the other in the Canadian service, and who said that Canada should never consent to anything but a fast service, seeing that with the recent development the speed of the great Atlantic liners would be increased. Twenty knots was the least that the country should accept, was the opinion of this gentleman. My own personal opinion is that Canada should secure the very fastest service for such subsidy as she can afford to give. To accept anything less would be unfair to those companies which are already in the business, and which supply an ordinary speed.

He had serious thoughts of taking the whole project on his own shoulders and carrying it through. From this he was eventually dissuaded, but it had long an attraction for him. Before many years had passed the Canadian Pacific Railway Company entered the Atlantic steamship field with vessels of a superior class.

Meanwhile, the year 1897 had drawn to a close. It had been an *annus mirabilis,* indeed, and had proved the sentimental cohesion of the British Empire. The high patriotism of that year, and the vows made, were such as must survive against an evil day to come. As Lord Strathcona remarked, when commenting on the marked attention paid, during the Jubilee proceedings, to the visiting soldiers: "It could not be otherwise, for, although they come from various countries, widely separated, they are all one people, subjects of the Queen."

Once when I called to see him, I found upon his desk some verses freshly cut from the *Times:*

> The tumult and the shouting dies;
> The captains and the kings depart;
> Still stands thine ancient sacrifice,
> A humble and a contrite heart.
> Lord God of Hosts, be with us yet,
> Lest we forget, lest we forget.

"That," he said to me earnestly, indicating the *Recessional,* "should be in the hymnals of all the Churches."

CHAPTER XXIII

THE EMIGRATION MOVEMENT (1896-1913)

IN this chapter we will glance at a few aspects of the great Canadian emigration propaganda, chiefly on the Continent of Europe, which dates from 1896. No propaganda so vast, so ingenious, so insistent and dramatic had ever been attempted in history, even by the United States of America. The era of what Sir Wilfrid Laurier once so happily called Canada's " spectacular development, 1896-1913," coincides so exactly with the term of Lord Strathcona's High Commissionership, and is, moreover, so intimately connected with the policy of emigration which he fostered, that it is little surprising that an eminent Canadian public man should already refer to it as the " Strathcona Period."

" Speaking for myself," wrote Lord Strathcona in the early stages of this campaign, " I would prefer to fill up our enormous tract of vacant lands with settlers from the British Isles. But the returning prosperity of British agriculture makes this increasingly difficult, and our lands only allow for people who may become loyal and prosperous British subjects."

In Great Britain and Ireland, Canada was free to make propaganda to reach the emigrating class in any way she chose. There were no restrictions of any kind from Government or from the police. On the Continent, however, active hostility was evinced towards emigration from the various Governments. There existed a police system which was hourly intruded into the daily lives of the people, and a whole series of laws which absolutely prohibited emigration propaganda, and surrounded the mere sale of tickets to

would-be emigrants with restrictions and regulations which did not merely harass but paralysed.

Thus there began a long struggle against the disabilities under which Canada had been placed by certain Continental authorities.

In its propaganda Canada was served by a force of emigration agents who were paid a bonus of so much *per capita*. The difficulties which the Canadian Government alone could aid these agents to evade successfully were those difficulties eloquently indicated by the emigration laws of the various countries. Every emigrant who was induced to leave Germany, Austria, or Russia was so induced by an evasion of the emigration laws prevailing in such countries, and he could, generally speaking, be secured in no other way. A Hamburg agent, for example, not only held a concession from the Hamburg Government, but also from each German State, all of which have separate regulations. He was liable at any moment to be fined by any of these States for a supposed breach of their varying regulations, such as sending a map of Canada to a man who did not actually ask for it, or who thought it prudent to deny having asked for it. These fines were frequent, and ranged from £5 upwards, and they naturally constituted a somewhat substantial "disability." Any action tending to increase the revenue of these agents made the fines more easy to support, and, consequently, Lord Strathcona was urged to increase the bonus paid to the agents.

Another suggestion was that the Government should seek to promote a movement from the Continent by paying the railway fares of emigrants to the port of embarkation. This would vary from 7s. to 30s. per head, according to distance. There was also the creation of a fund by which the Canadian railway fare from the port of debarkation to the destination on the North-West might also—in select cases—be in part, or altogether, defrayed.

On the whole, it was clear that Canada must offer more

advantages to the emigrants and to the agents in view of what was being done to promote emigration from the Continent to Brazil, to the Argentine Republic, and to Chili. These embraced free passages, free grants of land, and money advanced to start farming.

In 1896, in the case of Chili, these inducements were as follows :

Payment of the passage from Liverpool to Chili.

Free railway transportation from port of landing to destination.

Daily advance of sixpence for every adult, and threepence for every child, from the day of landing to the day of arrival on land.

Provision to colonist of pair of oxen, gear for field and road, plough, wooden cart, 150 planks and 60 lb. nails.

Free land grant of 170 acres to the colonist and 74 acres for every son about twelve years of age.

An advance of 30s. per month during first year of installation.

The supply of up-rooting machinery when necessary.

Free medical assistance and medicine for first two years.

The full amount to be repaid without interest, in fifths of the total amount, such repayments to begin after the expiration of three years.

These conditions were more liberal than those offered by Brazil, and perhaps by the Argentine, but even the Brazilian Government offered free passages and special advantages in regard to land and advances.

On October 8th, 1896, Sir Donald Smith wrote to Sir Wilfrid Laurier :

We must be careful what we do in the direction of encouraging any direct evasion of the laws in the different countries. The fact that this has been done in the past led to a rescript on the part of the Government of Hanover (through the activity of a railway agent) forbidding steamship agents to book passengers to Manitoba. The payment for the railway fares on the Continent to the port of embarkation, and in Canada from the ports of debarkation to destination, would involve an expenditure which Parliament might hesitate to approve, and the same remark applies to the advancing of money to emigrants for other purposes. It would be difficult to restrict the classes of people and countries to which such concession were given, and not only would it be open to considerable abuse, in view of the contiguity of Canada and the United States, but it might also lead to our getting into difficulties

with some of the Continental Governments. This applies to the use of cars also, especially in Germany, Austria and Russia.

What was urgently needed, in the High Commissioner's opinion, was, " more advertising, better pamphlets, a system of carefully selected return men; the continuance of the agent's bonus, the appointment of a travelling Government agent, closer relations with the great continental lines and their agents, and the equalisation of the rates to our North-West from American and Canadian ports."

With regard to pamphlets, he said: " We ought to have distinct leaflets in German, in Swedish, in Norwegian, and in Czech and Finnish, the general matter to deal largely with the German and Scandinavian colonies in Canada, as the case may be, with letters from German, Swedish, Norwegian or Danish settlers respectively for the pamphlet intended to be circulated in the respective countries. This leaflet should be of from 24 to 36 pages, but not larger. We should want about 70,000 leaflets—30,000 in German, 20,000 Swedish, and 20,000 Norwegian, and a few in the other languages.

A Scandinavian, who had recently visited the North-West under the auspices of the Department of the Interior, had written a report of its advantages. Lord Strathcona urged that this brochure should be printed in Norwegian and Swedish, about 25,000 to 30,000 in each language. In addition, he wrote:

About 40,000 handbooks similar to those at present in use, but improved, would be needed—20,000 German, 10,000 Norwegian, and 10,000 Swedish. We want some good photographs of German and Scandinavian farms in the North-West for illustrating the pamphlets. This is important. What, however, is even more important is a number of letters written by German and Scandinavian settlers, stating the places on the Continent from which they came, when they arrived in Canada, their experiences and their progress, over their names and addresses in Canada.

There are free libraries in many places on the Continent the same as in England, and a quantity of the literature in question could be

usefully distributed through such channels as well as through the schoolmasters.

Of course, we labour under a disadvantage on the Continent. Both Scandinavian and German emigration has been proceeding to the United States for the last fifty years. Most of the people in the different parts of the United States have friends on the Continent with whom they are no doubt in frequent communication, and it is a well-known fact that the largest proportion of the Continental emigrants go out to join their friends. The remainder—what may be called free emigration—is comparatively small, but it is, not unnaturally, influenced by the direction in which their friends and acquaintances may go. Within the last ten years we have had several thousands of emigrants coming within the latter description, and, in the course of time, a satisfactory nucleus will no doubt be formed, which will attract automatically further immigration. But in the meantime we must go on working, spending money in encouraging agents, in advertising, and in printing, so as to keep Canada before the people.

I may add that, on the Continent, particularly in Scandinavia, emigrants seem to prefer to travel by the fastest lines, and the newest steamers—conditions which, coupled with other circumstances, tend to restrict the direct movement to Canada.

One of the German agents expresses grave doubts as to the wisdom of our distributing pamphlets. He claims it is much better to carry on the work personally. He adds that, while many of the people cannot, or will not, read the pamphlets, they do get into the hands of the authorities when sent through the Post and thus they are informed of our endeavours to promote emigration. . . .

In France we have been getting more emigrants during the last two or three years, but by the laws and regulations in force, emigration is not allowed excepting by vessels sailing from French ports. Therefore, in the past, except occasionally, when vessels have left France direct for Canada, our chance of getting emigrants has been comparatively small. They may go by way of New York and to Eastern Canada, as these rates compare favourably with those from Montreal, but to the West, as you will be aware, we labour under a disadvantage. We ought to endeavour to open up communication with the Compagnie Général Transatlantique.

On another occasion he wrote:

With reference to the obstacles put in the way of emigration to Canada, I have many proofs that the Austrian Government, by often declining passports to intending immigrants, hinder them from leaving

the country. In addition, the German lines have given a guarantee to the Russian Government for all passengers arriving from Austria and Russia. This hinders the passage of such people across the frontiers and through Prussia, unless they book with them, and as there is little connection between Germany and Canada, the agents at the frontier stations induce passengers with some success to go to other countries, for instance, the United States, South America, or South Africa, with which they have direct steam communication.

In Russia the situation is very similar, while in Germany it is difficult for a certain class of emigrants to leave the country, namely for young men between 17 and 45, who in many cases cannot get a military passport, especially if the authorities think there is some chance of the men leaving Germany for ever. How dangerous it is for unlicensed agents to do business you will perhaps have heard of before, but it is even more dangerous for licensed agents when found to have persuaded anyone to go out.

An arrangement has been made with the German lines in consideration of their withdrawing their competition with the British lines in Scandinavia and Finland. As the consequence, the British lines are not allowed to carry more than 6 per cent. of the emigration from the Continent (except as before mentioned), the other 94 per cent. being retained by the German lines. If the British carry more than 6 per cent. of the traffic, they have to make a certain payment per head to the Continental lines, and on the other hand, if they do not get 6 per cent, they receive a certain payment per head (at present rates it is £3 per adult) on the number required to make up that proportion.

This is the arrangement effected by the North Atlantic Conference which includes the Canadian lines. You will readily understand therefore, that it is not in the interests of the British lines to encourage emigration from the Continent. Their agents, however, usually represent the German lines as well. As most of the vessels of the latter sail to New York, the agreement to which I have referred must operate injuriously upon emigration to Manitoba and the North-West from the Continent.

It emphasises what was mentioned in my previous letter—that we can never hope to secure a large emigration from the Continent until we manage in some way or other to secure the co-operation of the two great German lines—the North German Lloyd and the Hamburg American Steamship Company. The arrangement does not materially affect emigration to the United States, but it does operate prejudicially so far as Canada is concerned, in view of the higher inland rates from American ports to our North-West.

Of course, this active propaganda instantly attracted the attention of foreign Governments. As early as the summer of 1896, the Russian Minister of the Interior, M. Yermoleff, notified several of the Provincial Governors that " signs of the coming revival of the pernicious activity of emigration agents are becoming manifest," and he requested them not only through the medium of the police, but personally, to point out to the population the illegality of their leaving the mother country on their own accord.

The following is an extract from a confidential circular addressed to the Sheriffs and Police Officers by the Governor, Secret Department, Wilna, July 3rd, 1896 :

As a preventative against the carrying on of emigration by means of passes, certificates stating that there is no impediment to foreign travel should only be issued to tax-payers (by which every one with the exception of the nobility and merchants are meant) with the greatest discretion.

From a point of view proven by experience, the emigration movement is not only invoked by the agitation of foreign emigration companies who, with the aid and assistance of local agents, issue proclamations with promises of sure subsistence and other inducements, but also through the participation in this propaganda of a certain class of individuals who speculate on easily acquiring the hastily and rashly disposed-of property of the emigrants. I, therefore, request you to use all means in your power to ascertain the whereabouts of emigration agents and their abettors, supporting in any way this illegal traffic and, in accordance with paragraph 328 of the Law, bring same to justice.

In case of a judicial pursuit being impossible, endeavour must be made in accordance with the rules of increased protection (Exceptional Law) and the results reported to me to enable me to bring about an administrative expulsion of the said people from the respective districts.

Close watch is to be kept on those individuals who have proven their untrustworthiness through various dishonourable actions, they forming the class desirous of enriching themselves at their neighbours' cost and always ready to place themselves at the disposition of those people engaged with the enlistment of emigrants. A special outlook should, therefore, be kept on such persons, and on the faintest signs of an emigration movement the Exceptional Law be brought to bear on them.

Further I request all Sheriffs to make enquiries into the present sentiments of the population on emigration, examine the source of all rumours, take the necessary measures and inform me without delay of any noteworthy features and developments.

Similarly, all over the Continent the High Commissioner's emigration propaganda met with severe official disfavour.

In Germany and Austria emigration could not be directly forbidden in consequence of the free constitution and free movement law, but, for want of uniform emigration law, police instructions were issued whereby a concession from the States must be obtained before transportation orders could be issued, and the State was empowered, if it thought fit, to refuse the concession or withdraw a concession already granted without stating reasons. Should a concession be granted, a clause was inserted whereby the holder was forbidden to incite to emigration through publicity or distribution of printed matter, through correspondence or by oral communication with the population in any way. Information and transportation orders might only be issued on the application of persons who had decided to emigrate. Violation of these instructions was punished with a fine or imprisonment. Non-concession agents issuing transportation orders or information were punished with imprisonment.

There was, of course, also another side to the business. Canada was dangling her bait in the deep waters of Europe. She was poaching; and this was likely to prove a dangerous game not only for herself but for the " predominant partner " as well.

Writing to Mr. Chamberlain from the Foreign Office in August, 1898, Lord Salisbury observed :

I should be the last to discourage the efforts of the Dominion of Canada to increase her population by every legitimate means ; but you will understand the necessity for proceeding with the utmost caution, and with reference to the emigration ordinances of the several

countries concerned, otherwise it is clear that the cares and responsibilities of the Foreign Office will be vastly increased.

In 1898, the German Minister for the Interior, Count von Posadowsky-Welmer, complained to Sir Frank Lascelles that the Canadian propaganda was giving great offence to the Emperor and those subjects who had the interests of Germany at heart, and that it would be better for the good understanding between the two countries if means were found to check it. Germany had need of all her present population, "but if it were considered advisable for any classes, or even groups, to emigrate, the German Government desired to exercise an influence as to the choice of countries of their destination." The inference was plain—Canada was *non grata* to official Germany, however popular and attractive she was becoming amongst the masses of impoverished peasants.

According to a leading German newspaper, the *Hamburger Nachrichten:*

The arrogance of the Canadian, Lord Strathcona, and the utter disrespect shown by him for the laws of the Empire in publicly conducting his emigration propaganda on German soil and in the very teeth of the authorities demand that vigorous representations should be made at once to the British Government, which is, we presume, still responsible for this Colony. While apart from the weakening of the Fatherland which the success of such propaganda entails, the attempt to lure our fellow-countrymen to this desolate, sub-arctic region is, upon humane grounds alone, to be denounced as criminal.

* * * * * *

A glimpse into the practical working of the propaganda in Austria is furnished in one of Lord Strathcona's letters to Hon. Clifford Sifton:

All the agents claim that they have been active in organising the movement from Galicia. They say they have obtained from the people who have already emigrated, and in other ways, an immense number of addresses in the country, and that they have been in correspondence with these people for months past, sending them letters and pamphlets. They have also agents working surreptitiously for them.

Of course the law will not permit anything in the direction of

encouraging emigration, and these sub-agents are generally pedlars, hawkers and others, who are moving about the country, and in that way they disseminate quietly, but effectively, quantities of literature. They have also spent considerable sums in advertising, such as the law permits. Although it is quite possible they may exaggerate their efforts and their expenditure, there is no doubt in my mind that they have been spending both time and money in the endeavour to increase the business from Galicia. They claim in many cases that they have done more work than Professor Oleskow[1] has, and the tendency seems to be to underestimate the position of that gentleman, although one or two of the agents admit that he has some influence, and is able to secure an amount of publicity for Canada which they could not do.

At the same time, it is only right for me to add that they all appear to have been in communication with Professor Oleskow, and to have a pecuniary consideration in the event of his working through their particular agencies. Of course none of them know of our arrangement with him, but in any case, in order to retain their business, they would not hesitate to minimize his efforts.

The greater part of the continental business—except Scandinavian—was controlled by the North German Lloyd Company, of Bremen, and the Hamburg-Amerika Company, of Hamburg. The latter company owned and controlled the Hansa Line of steamers. It was clear, therefore, that if these great lines were working in Canadian interests, Canada would have very powerful friends at Berlin. Accordingly, in February, 1898, Lord Strathcona visited Bremen and Hamburg to see what could be done in person. He saw the directors of the North German Lloyd Company. With reference to this visit he wrote :

I discussed the matter very fully with them, and asked if they would tell me, freely and frankly, why it was we had not the benefit of their co-operation in this matter. The reply was that they only ran their steamers to New York, and that, the railway rates to Manitoba and the West being higher than from Quebec and Montreal, they could not compete, and consequently left the question of emigration to the North-West severely alone. Not only was this the case, but they told me distinctly that if the people came to them or their agents and wanted

[1] Professor Oleskow was a subsidised agent for the Canadian Government.

information about the North-West, they did their best to persuade them to go elsewhere. So that, as I have pointed out on many occasions, the influence of this great Company is really exercised against Canadian interests. I asked them if it were possible to equalise the rates, whether they would then pursue a different policy. Their reply was in the affirmative.

In 1896 a correspondence had taken place between Herr Albert Ballin and the German Minister of the Interior, which became so acrimonious that the former did not hesitate to appeal to the Kaiser. He wrote:

If your Majesty agrees that the efforts of the Hamburg-Amerika Company in the direction of a German Mercantile Marine are worthy of Imperial support, it is intolerable that we should be met at every hand in our policy of securing profitable traffic by petty official obstacles of which your Majesty, I am convinced, has no cognisance. Thousands of licensed Germans and Polish emigrants are now forced to proceed from Dutch and English ports, who otherwise would embark by the steamers of this Company.

In reply, he was officially informed that a uniform emigration law for the Empire was being prepared, making emigration increasingly difficult, and that the steamship company's agents must restrict their propaganda exclusively to such districts as the Government indicated. With regard to the transportation of German subjects to such British Colonies as Canada, the Government would not encourage it until the completion of inquiries concerning the future of such emigrants in relation to their German citizenship and the future homogeneity of the Empire. Meanwhile, the company had a great field to draw upon in Russia and Austria, and every facility would be given to make Hamburg and Bremen the great European entry ports for continental emigrants of non-German nationality.

In the annual report of the Hamburg-Amerika Company it was stated that, "in order to give an impulsion to business the cultivation of emigration is an absolute necessity." Russia was designated as the most adaptable land for the enlistment of emigrants. Such emigrants were met at the

His Opinion of Herr Ballin

Prussian frontier stations by the agents of the steamship company and transported direct to Hamburg.

Herr Ballin, the head of the Hamburg-Amerika Steamship Company, was a man already of note and destined to be one of the most powerful forces in modern Germany. Regarding him and his views, Lord Strathcona addressed the following highly interesting letter to the Hon. Clifford Sifton :

I had a most interesting conversation with Herr Albert Ballin. I asked him whether there were any suggestions he had to make by which the position of Canada on the Continent could be improved.

Herr Ballin strongly urged that we should arrange for an agriculture delegation to be sent out from Germany to Canada. He mentioned that the Society of St. Raphael (a Catholic organisation) has ramifications over the whole of Europe, and that its principal object is the dissemination of reliable information among emigrants and their welfare in the land of their adoption.

What he proposes is, that the Society should be invited to send out to Canada a Commission of, say, four persons, two to be Catholics and two to be Protestants, who could spend a couple of months in the different provinces of Canada, and prepare a report for the Society.

He states that this report would receive wide publicity all over Germany in the newspapers which are under the control of the Society, and he added that it might also be published in pamphlet form. As regards the expenses, the Hamburg-Amerika Company will gladly provide passages out and home for the delegates, and there is no doubt also that the Canadian Pacific and other railways would do their share. Therefore, there is only the question of the living expenses of the delegates, and while they would be men whose opinion would carry weight, they would not, he thought, be extravagant in the matter of expenses, and probably about $1,000 or $1,500 would cover everything, so far as the Government is concerned.

I told him the proposal appeared to me a good one, and that I would commend it to your consideration, although a similar proposal has been recommended to your predecessors on more than one occasion, and I think it is an opportunity of gaining publicity for the Dominion which we ought not to miss.

Herr Ballin some years ago suggested that the Government should have an agent at Hamburg ; one who might be nominally a commercial agent, but would also keep a watch on emigration matters so far as the Dominion is concerned. Herr Ballin recommends that a

German should be appointed, one who is in a good position and well known in official quarters, and that before taking up his duties, should have an opportunity of paying a visit to different parts of Canada. Your predecessor did not feel able to accept this suggestion and the matter fell through. Herr Ballin still thinks that a Canadian agent should be appointed, but he now favours Berlin instead of Hamburg, for the reason that, under the new emigration law, all the administrative work in connection with emigration will emanate from Berlin, instead of from the different states of the German Empire. Besides Berlin is a central place, and the different parts of Germany can readily be reached from it. Herr Ballin thinks that the British Ambassador and the German Departments should be consulted on the matter.

We think that this would lead to the selection of some officials on the retired list, who would have access to all the departments, and might thus be instrumental in smoothing over difficulties affecting Canada, make our work in regard to emigration easier than it is at present, and keep us informed of what is going on. Herr Ballin considers that such an officer need not have an office, and that his expenditure would be confined to salary and travelling expenses, which need not exceed from £500 to £600 a year.

Herr Ballin also gave me some information about the new German law in regard to emigration. It is to come into force, as you know, on the 1st of April next. Its provisions, on the face of it, do not appear to be much more stringent than those of the old Act, but its administration is expected to be much more severe. The regulations are not yet issued, and both the Companies and the Agents appear to be in a state of much uncertainty as to what their powers are to be in the future.

They seem to think, however, that more difficulties will be placed in their hands than hitherto. Herr Ballin is a member of the Commission for the working of the Act. While the Bill was passing through Parliament, he stated that there appeared to be a feeling in favour of prohibiting altogether emigration to Canada. He does not think, however, that this is likely to be done, and I am of his opinion, especially in view of the fact that if such a regulation were passed the business of the Hansa line of steamers, which is practically the Hamburg-Amerika Company, would be done away with. That steamship company is one of the powerful operations in Germany, and I hardly think that anything so contrary to their interest would easily be carried out.

It would not be wise in the interests of Canada, Herr Ballin thought, to reduce the bonus, either on Galicians or other emigrants to Canada, for the present at any rate. He strongly advised that any reduc-

tion to be made should take effect from the close of the actual season, say from the 1st of September or the 1st of October, and was of the opinion that, in order to secure the continued interest of the agents, it would not be well to make too great a reduction.

While in Berlin Lord Strathcona had a general conversation with Sir Frank Lascelles, the British Ambassador, on the subject of emigration. He also had an interview with the British Ambassador at Vienna, Sir Horace Rumbold. But he wrote :

The matter is not one in which Her Majesty's representatives abroad take much interest. This you can readily understand, as it is a delicate matter, and the laws are so restrictive. At the same time, however, Sir Frank Lascelles promised to keep an eye on the matter, and to communicate with me if anything came under his notice prejudicial to the Dominion and its interests.

In his discussion with the steamship agents at Hamburg, Lord Strathcona " impressed upon them that the Canadian Government was sensible of the efforts they had been making to promote emigration to Canada, and that while a reduction in the rate of bonus then paid was being considered, there was no desire to do anything which might appear harsh or illiberal."

Emigration from Germany in 1898 had fallen from a quarter of a million to less than fifty thousand for the year. This was attributed partly to the reports from the United States and partly to the increased prosperity of Germany, workmen being in greater demand, and at higher wages, than they had been. Therefore, Lord Strathcona reported :

We cannot, in view of the restrictions which are placed on emigration, and from other causes, hope to get many emigrants from Germany proper at present, but we must continue our bonuses there, and encourage the steamship agents as much as possible to work for Canada. . . . While there may not be much to expect from Germany, there is likely to be a considerable movement from Austria and from Southern Russia. . . .

In connection with emigration from Scandinavia, we have, however, much to gain from the British New York lines by the equalisation of

the rates. In Norway, Sweden, and Denmark, the White Star, Cunard and American lines hold a far better position than the Canadian lines, and in Scandinavia there are a few agents who represent more than one line, and we should certainly gain by a removal of the present hostility of the agents of the New York lines, which is mainly the result of the difference in the railway rates.

The question of a direct and continuous transportation was a vital one, and Lord Strathcona strongly urged that something should be done to remove what, in his judgment, was a great obstacle to emigration from all parts of the Continent to Canada, and one which also affected Canadian interests in the United Kingdom. What he wanted to see was some arrangements between the American lines and the Canadian Pacific Railway Company, by which passengers could travel from New York, Boston or Philadelphia to the nearest point on the Canadian Pacific Railway and thence to the West by Canada's own transcontinental line. Even if an additional payment of some kind should be involved, he thought that means might be found of arranging the matters as between the Government and the railway in view of its importance.

In a letter to the Ministry, written in June, 1899, he stated :

I am glad to say that foreign immigration to Canada is growing. According to all accounts the Galicians are doing well, and will eventually make excellent settlers. The Doukhobors also create an excellent impression, and their work in Southern Russia, under great disadvantages, indicates that they possess the qualities which are necessary to success in the Canadian North-West. We have not had so many Germans and Scandinavians as we would like. This arises from the fact that the Governments of the countries in question are opposed to emigration, and make it as difficult as possible, apart from the fact that the people of those countries are enjoying an era of prosperity at the present time. The success of the continental settlers in the different parts of Canada is sure to have its effect.

So much for continental emigration. In the United Kingdom the High Commissioner's zeal was even greater.

Attracted to British Columbia

The following is an extract from an article which appeared in the *Montreal Witness* on May 5th, 1897 :

The efforts of Sir Donald Smith to enlighten the public on the other side as to the class of immigrants desired in Canada are bearing fruit. Instead of stunted, pale-faced creatures, the products of the streets of large cities, who never saw a tree or cow in their lives, of whom we have had far too many samples in the past, most of the emigrants this season, so far, are splendid specimens of the farm labourer class. There is also noticeable a considerable sprinkling of the better class of farmers, men with means to invest ; but chiefly there is knowledge of the conditions which await them, and fitness for meeting them.

The Canadian Pacific Railway Company has always been labouring in this direction, and it is to the credit of the societies in England that they have latterly made the most rigid investigation into the capabilities and character of the intending emigrants before they have sanctioned their coming out. . . .

It is noticeable in the bodies of emigrants thus far landed and distributed this season that a considerable proportion were destined for British Columbia. Such persons are to be distinguished from the labouring class. They are persons with small means, who, having heard of the wonderful wealth of this comparatively new Province, have pulled up stakes in the hope of making sudden fortune. Whether these—disappointed, for the most part, as they must inevitably be—will settle down to sober pursuits, of which the reward will be slow but probably sure in the end, remains to be seen.

Anything that could tend to popularise Canada, and to familiarise the public with the country and its products, received Sir Donald's support ; and of the innumerable plans and projects, so often fantastic, suggested by immigration agents and officials during these early years of his High Commissionership, there was one of which I once heard him say that its audacity took his breath away. The originator postulated that Scandinavian emigration to Canada was eminently desirable. A fleet of vessels was to be chartered, each equipped and provisioned for a long voyage, having on board a vigorous lecturer (of the " revivalist " pattern) and a brass band. On a suitable date—a Sunday—the ships were each to put into different Scandinavian ports on some

pretext or other, the populace was to be summoned, the band was to play "The Maple Leaf For Ever" and other inspiring melodies, the lecturer was to harangue the crowd on the attractions of the Canadian North-West, and finally he was to deliver an impassioned exhortation to the following effect:

> Men and women! material salvation awaits you. Canada, the land of promise, opens her arms to receive you. Your fellow Norwegians, already there basking in prosperity and happiness, call across the Atlantic to you. Delay is fatal. Now is the acceptable time. Yonder good ship sails to-morrow. Passage money is not needed. Come forward and enrol your names and sail with us to Canada and fortune.'

The ingenious author of this happy scheme was greatly discomfited when Lord Strathcona declined to consider it seriously. "You are," he bitterly complained, "throwing away the chance of getting ten thousand able-bodied Norwegians on the spot."

No mention was made of the probable attitude of the Norwegian Government. "I have no doubt he designed that the Norwegian Government should follow the entire Norwegian population to Canada, too," was Lord Strathcona's comment.

At a later stage, in 1905-6, came the exploits of the notorious North Atlantic Trading Company, which entered into a contract with the Canadian Government to supply emigrants to Canada at a fixed bonus *per capita*. The class of emigrants secured through this channel showed distinct deterioration, being recruited from amongst the least desirable European races. What Lord Strathcona himself thought of the new arrangement may be gathered from a letter to the Prime Minister in which he reviews the work of the preceding years.

Previously he had written to Sir Wilfrid Laurier in reference to a statement in the *Globe* newspaper, disclaiming having opened negotiations with the North Atlantic Trading

Company, and stating that its suggestions never commended themselves to his better judgment.

" I had no connection at all," he wrote, " with the negotiations, the Department of the Interior having placed itself in direct communication with the company. While personally opposed, however, I desired to carry out the policy of the Department."

The letter to Sir Wilfrid Laurier, referred to above, written under date May 12th, 1906, reads as follows :

From the time of my appointment as High Commissioner I was, as you are aware, very much impressed with the necessity of an active emigration propaganda, both on the Continent and in the United Kingdom, as my frequent despatches, and many recommendations, to the Minister of the Interior will show.

In the interests of the work, I visited Hamburg, Bremen, Berlin, Vienna and Paris. It was very evident to me, at that time, as the result of my enquiries, that our preparations, and the co-operation we were receiving on the Continent, would inevitably result, in the near future, in a large emigration to the North-West.

My principal reason for not favouring a hard and fast contract with any body of individuals like the North Atlantic Trading Company was the fear that it might land us in difficulties with some of the Governments concerned. There was also the consideration that they would obtain the advantage, without any great expense or effort to themselves, of the movement which was bound shortly to take place, as the result of our continuous educational work with the various agencies on the Continent. My idea was that the agents, who had been working on our behalf, should themselves participate in the bonuses, and that we should endeavour also to secure the co-operation of the large Continental steamship companies, which it would not have been difficult to arrange, judging from my interview with the North German Lloyd Directors and Herr Ballin of the Hamburg-Amerika Line—gentlemen of great influence on the Continent—as reported in my letters before referred to. Of course, it would have been possible gradually to lessen the bonus payments as the emigration increased—the increase being the natural consequence of the work that was being done, and of the successful settlement of the people who were going out from year to year.

I do not wish to minimise in any way the energy shown by the Department of the Interior in the promotion of emigration. They have certainly been alive to the importance of the question within the

last seven or eight years, and have not hesitated to incur increased expenditure on the work, which, I may say, was recommended for many years before it was adopted. They are, therefore, entitled to credit for the increase in the emigration that has taken place ; but it must not be forgotten that the continuous and effective work which had been going on for some years, in adverse circumstances, both here and on the Continent, had prepared the way for the larger movement that set in when the proper time arrived.

Briefly, therefore, I will conclude by saying that I am and always have been in favour of a vigorous emigration policy on the Continent, in the United Kingdom, and in the United States. At the same time, however, I did not view the arrangement with the North Atlantic Trading Company with any personal favour for the reasons stated above ; and I am inclined to the opinion that the emigration which has taken place would have been at least as large in ordinary circumstances, under the arrangements in force prior to 1899.

Throughout his eighteen years of office Lord Strathcona went incessantly up and down the land preaching from the same text, urging men to emigrate, and posterity will bear witness that he was not heard in vain.[1]

In June, 1899, he wrote to Mr. Chamberlain :

They say that we are draining Great Britain of her best blood in order to build up and strengthen the Colonies. But I venture to express my conviction that the strength of the Colonies is Great Britain's strength, and that if ever the need should arise these same young men will return with their patriotism increased and invigorated, rather than weakened, to give their help to the Mother Country !

These, again, were prophetic words, the truth of which has been more than proved by the devoted gallantry of Canadian troops at Mons, Ypres, and on a dozen other bloody battlefields in France and Flanders.

[1] In the whole period from 1897 to 1912, the total immigration was over two and a quarter millions ; the British Isles sent 961,000, the United States 784,000, and the rest of the world 594,000. The total increase in population in this period was marked ; between 1891 and 1901 the population grew from 4,833,239 to 5,371,315, and in the following decade to 7,204,838, practically double the population of forty years before. The number of British immigrants rose from an average of 10,000 in the last years of the nineteenth century to 50,000 in 1904, and 138,000 in 1912. At the end of this period Canada had become the chief destination of emigrants from the United Kingdom, far surpassing the United States, though Australia, imitating the Canadian policy of publicity and offering liberal reduced or advanced passages, was again becoming a close rival.—O. D. Skelton, *Canada and its Provinces.*

CHAPTER XXIV

"STRATHCONA'S HORSE" (1898-1900)

LORD STRATHCONA'S primal effort as a legislator in the House of Lords awakened much interest both in Britain and in Canada. In deference to the wishes of many leading Colonists in London, the High Commissioner undertook to bring forward the Bill for legalising in the United Kingdom marriages in the Colonies with a deceased wife's sister.

It is hardly surprising to learn now, on the authority of the late Duke of Argyll, that this incursion into ecclesiastical law and ordinance did not meet with the approval of Queen Victoria. Her Majesty is said to have remarked bluntly that she thought "his Labrador lordship should be the last to meddle in such matters." The Royal innuendo merely illustrated the persistence of the legend concerning Lord Strathcona's own marriage, which both the Duke and Mr. Chamberlain had already endeavoured to expose. The Queen's further remark that she was sure Lord Strathcona had not consulted Lady Strathcona in his choice of a subject was, perhaps, shrewder.

April 7, 1898.

MY DEAR SIR WILFRID LAURIER,—As you are no doubt aware, the question of legalising marriages with a deceased wife's sister is a matter that is brought every year before the Imperial Parliament. So far, while the measure has on one or two occasions passed the House of Lords, it has not become law.

Within the last few years an endeavour has also been made to legalise in this country marriages of this kind which have been contracted in the Colonies under local legislation; but no Act dealing with this part of the question has yet been passed.

The matter, as regards the Colonial marriages, is now up again for consideration, and I have been asked by the Marriage Law Reform

Association to introduce a Bill on the subject into the House of Lords. The matter is, I believe, generally approved of in the other Colonies, but having regard to my position as High Commissioner, I rather hesitate to comply with the request that has been made to me without first submitting it to you and knowing your views. If you see no objection to my doing so, I shall be quite prepared to introduce such a Bill; but if you think it would be better for me not to do so, I shall merely confine myself to supporting such a measure in the House in a general way, and by voting in favour of it.

Kindly write me on the subject at your early convenience, and believe me, etc.,

STRATHCONA.

It was reported at the time that Sir Wilfrid Laurier, dreading clerical criticism, strongly deprecated the intention of the High Commissioner. How much truth there was in the report may be gleaned from the following cable message, dispatched on the day the Premier received the foregoing letter:

Your letter received about Colonial Marriage Bill. There is no objection to your presenting it. On the contrary I think it quite proper for you to do so.

LAURIER.

The case which Lord Strathcona presented to the House of Lords seemed an overwhelming one. The Bill concerned itself alone with that part of the debated question—marriage with the deceased wife's sister—upon which both Houses of the Imperial Parliament had expressed favourable verdict. It did not deal in any way with the question of marriages with a brother's widow or wife's niece.

In the House of Lords in 1896 the majority in favour of the Bill was 38; and the opposition might now be said to be confined to the extreme Ritualistic clergy. It was clearly an anomaly and an injustice that marriages made valid in Colonies whose legislation had been revised and sanctioned by the law officers of the Crown in Britain should still be invalid at home, and that a Colonial married lady, on landing at Liverpool, might find herself a mistress and under the ban of society.

Here it may be noticed that by inadvertence the Bill was framed in broader terms than was intended. As drawn, marriages solemnised between persons temporarily visiting a Colony would come within the provisions of the Bill. As the remedy provided by the Bill was sought only on behalf of domiciled Colonists, Lord Strathcona consented to the insertion of words which would limit the operation of the Bill to marriages effected by such persons.

Lord Strathcona began his speech with great diffidence. He said :

This is the first occasion on which I have had the honour and privilege of being present as a member of your Lordships' House. I am confident, however, that your Lordships will extend to me that indulgence which is always given to a new member.

The Bill which I have to introduce has for its object the legalising in the United Kingdom of marriages lawfully contracted between a man and his deceased wife's sister in any of the British Colonies. It is intended to deal only with the marriages of legally domiciled residents, and in order to remove any doubts there might be on that point, amendments would be moved in Committee, if the Bill be read a second time, to make that absolutely clear.

The Bill is also provided with other safeguards to prevent its provisions from being abused. Marriages with a deceased wife's sister have been legalised in the Colonies, with the active consent of the Crown, and with the tacit approval of the Government and of the Imperial Parliament ; but, in spite of this, the children of such legal Colonial marriages are regarded in the United Kingdom as illegitimate, and cannot succeed to real property in this country. It is believed, too, that they may be liable to other disabilities. It is to remove this stain from children who have been born in wedlock, lawful by laws passed by the Colonial Legislatures and approved by the responsible advisers of the Crown, that the Bill has been introduced.

Marriage with a deceased wife's sister is not legal in the United Kingdom, and the question does not, therefore, arise in the same way ; but such marriage is legal in the Colonies. Why should the children of such marriages, when they come home to the Mother Country, bear the mark of illegitimacy ? Such a Bill as this, if it be passed, will be an act of justice to many and an injustice to no one.

Representing the Colonies, and speaking with a knowledge of the facts, I can say that every man in the Colonies looks upon himself as an Englishman just as much as if he had been born in the

United Kingdom. He glories in the name of Englishman. He has all the aspirations of one and the same loyalty and devotion to the Empire. As the Colonists feel that they are equally members of the great Empire to which all Englishmen belong, I hope your Lordships will send a message of goodwill to those for whom I plead—a message which will be appreciated throughout the Colonies, and show them that your Lordships have as much consideration for those in the Colonies for whom I speak, as for those in the Mother Country, that you desire to do justice to all.

Notwithstanding this eloquent appeal, the measure still met with much opposition; and, although Lord Strathcona again brought it up later, several years were to elapse before it became law.

Meanwhile, many other affairs claimed the High Commissioner's attention. In the summer of 1898 a joint conference between Britain and America, to settle outstanding disputes, was decided upon. But there was much difficulty about the choice of delegates; and before the problem was solved Canada's thirty-first birthday came and went.

Rarely, if ever, had there been such a gathering of influential Canadians and friends of the Dominion as assembled to dinner at the Imperial Institute. Amongst those who supported Lord Strathcona was the Duke of Norfolk, British Postmaster-General, whose valuable assistance as the head of the English Roman Catholics had been invoked in the Manitoba School settlement.

In proposing the toast of the evening, Lord Strathcona said:

I think all Canadians will agree with me that we have one day we can call our own, one on which we can gather together and show that while true Britons and devoted subjects of Her Majesty, we are none the less citizens of the Dominion. We are not a foreign nation, but a kindred nation with Britain—members of the great Empire, as are those within the United Kingdom. . . .

It is also very pleasant to find better relations between the United States and Canada. We pray very fervently, all of us, that the newly appointed High Commission will give full satisfaction to each and all of us in the difficulties they are going to deal with.

We do not wish to stand at arm's length from our neighbours. We desire to be on the most friendly terms possible with them, and it would appear that that desire is heartily reciprocated. Still, we wish to continue as one people with the Mother Country, and do our part in that great Empire of which we are all so proud.

On this occasion the Chairman's health was proposed by the veteran Canadian statesman, Sir Charles Tupper,[1] who again paid a glowing tribute to Lord Strathcona's work :

After Confederation took place a great impassable desert separated Ottawa from the great North-West, and it was impossible to reach one from the other except by traversing foreign soil. All this has now been changed, and that it has been so is largely due to the great financial qualities of Lord Strathcona. To his energy, ability, and indomitable perseverance the bringing together of the isolated Provinces is in no small measure due.

In July, 1898, Mr. Chamberlain wrote Lord Strathcona that the Queen had approved the appointment of the Earl of Minto to succeed Lord Aberdeen :

I feel sure that Lord Minto will receive from you that loyal support always given to the Representative of the Queen, and I am convinced that the new Governor-General will carry to Canada the most anxious desire to do everything in his power for the welfare of the Dominion.

On cabling the news to the Premier, Lord Strathcona received the following reply from Sir Wilfrid Laurier :

Minto's appointment will be well received, especially as he has already served in this country. Personally, it will be a pleasure for me to give him every assistance. You can assure Mr. Chamberlain of this.

At Wallsend, at the launch of the *Mount Royal* (so named out of compliment to Lady Strathcona, who performed the ceremony), the High Commissioner said :

I do not care to speak any longer of Canada, and the other countries constituting the Empire, as Colonies. They are constituents

[1] Just as this book goes to press, news has been received of Sir Charles Tupper's death. "The grand old man of Canada" passed away on October 30th, 1915, at Bexley Heath, Kent, at the age of 94—having been born at Nova Scotia in 1821, the year that Napoleon died.

of an Empire, one and indivisible. They are English quite as much as is Great Britain, and to remain so to all time is the desire of Canada and all the other possessions of the Empire. Though there is in Canada a portion of the population who did not originally come from Great Britain, I can say without hesitation that they are just as good and loyal British subjects as ourselves. They are Englishmen only with one difference: that they speak French as well as English. That circumstance is a source of safety in Canada, and one which contributes to the safety of the whole Empire.

* * * * * *

To return now to the relations between Britain and America. The Anglo-American Commission sat both at Quebec and Washington; but it soon became clear that no decision would be arrived at concerning the dispute.

On April 15th, 1899, Lord Strathcona wrote to Sir Wilfrid Laurier:

When discussing with Mr. Chamberlain some little time back the question of placing Canadian Government securities on the same footing as those of the United Kingdom in respect of trust investments, he suggested the possibility of an arrangement being come to between the two governments by which, on the conversion of the Canadian loans, they might in a sense be "taken over" by England—that is, that the new issue should be guaranteed by the Imperial Government.

With this guarantee the money could, of course, be obtained on much more favourable terms, the saving on interest being not less than from one-half to three-quarters per cent. His idea was that in consideration of this Canada would devote a portion of the saving to Imperial purposes. He was very particular in impressing upon me that this was partly a personal idea of his own, wholly deprived of anything of an official character; and it was in that sense I told him I would bring the matter confidentially to your notice.

Of course, it is one of those things which, if thought worthy of further notice at all, would demand the gravest consideration both in Canada and here, and perhaps you will kindly at your convenience let me know if you think it worth while discussing the matter further.

You appear to be having long speeches from Sir Charles Tupper and his friends in the House, but let us hope that this is not an indication of a long session.

Photo: Notman & Son, Montreal

STRATHCONA'S HORSE

On parade at Montreal prior to departure for South Africa

Trouble in South Africa

In November, 1898, Lord Strathcona again crossed the Atlantic to discuss with the Government at Ottawa the questions of immigration, steamship service, and so forth. From Ottawa he went to Montreal, and his sojourn there was rendered memorable not only by his further munificence to McGill University, but also by a brilliant social function in honour of Lord Minto, the new Governor-General.

It had five years previously fallen to Lord Strathcona to afford Lord and Lady Aberdeen their first formal introduction to Montreal society. By a happy coincidence, the same duty was again discharged in the case of Lord and Lady Minto. The dinner and reception given by the High Commissioner and Lady Strathcona at their Montreal mansion in honour of the new Governor-General was, in every respect, a most successful and brilliant function.

* * * * * *

Early in the summer of 1899 there began to loom up in the distance the shadow of serious trouble in South Africa. From the first Lord Strathcona took the deepest interest in the question. Once he said to Mr. Chamberlain :

> There is a curious resemblance in many respects to the events of 1869. Kruger, like Riel, has a complete misunderstanding of his position. I believe that if there was anyone in South Africa that both parties and races could trust, war might be averted.

While the negotiations between Mr. Chamberlain, Lord Milner and President Kruger were in progress, and the question raised by the Uitlanders of the Parliamentary representation of rapidly increasing populations was being agitated in Canada, the Laurier Ministry brought in a fresh Redistribution Bill. Promptly, the accusation of "gerrymandering" was launched against them. This charge obtained much currency in the English Press, but as Lord Strathcona always pointed out, the Act was very necessary in that Canada, like the Transvaal, was face to face with a difficulty common to all new countries, namely, that im-

portant interests might at any moment spring up in desert places.

This difficulty was one with which the Canadian statesmen, who carried through the work of federation, clearly foresaw that Canada, as a Dominion, would have to deal. Consequently provision was made, under their inspiration, for meeting it in the Constitution accorded by the British North American Act to the federated Provinces. But, in acting upon the provision, each successive Canadian Government of necessity exposed itself to the accusation of " gerrymandering " the constituencies in order to acquire for its own supporters the largest possible amount of Parliamentary representation. The accusation, therefore, was freely made against the Government of Sir Wilfrid Laurier and his colleagues in reference to their new Redistribution Bill.

On July 14th, 1899, Mr. Chamberlain wrote to Lord Strathcona that he had just been informed by Lord Windsor that a mutual friend had had an interview with Sir Wilfrid Laurier at Ottawa :

> Sir Wilfrid has authorised him to say he will at once introduce into the Dominion Parliament a resolution supporting the maintenance of Imperial Supremacy throughout South Africa provided I intimate through you that such a resolution would be welcomed.
>
> If Sir Wilfrid Laurier is correctly reported I hasten to say that such a resolution of sympathy and support as he suggests would be most cordially welcomed by Her Majesty's Government.

The High Commissioner cabled instantly to the Premier, and on the 24th Sir Wilfrid Laurier replied :

> I have your favour of the 15th inst., repeating your telegram of the same day about the resolution of sympathy which we were asked to move on the Uitlanders question. . . . We are considering at this moment if it would be advisable for us to introduce such a resolution in the House of Commons.

In the interval Mr. Chamberlain had been growing anxious. A stage in the correspondence with President Kruger had been reached when Canada's expression would

be of signal value. An interview with Lord Strathcona on July 26th was followed by a letter next day, the date of the sending by the Colonial Secretary of an ultimatum to Kruger.

COLONIAL OFFICE,
July 27, 1899.

DEAR LORD STRATHCONA,—Although I fully appreciate the difficulties of your Premier's position, I hope he will not find them insuperable.

How greatly it would strengthen the hands of Her Majesty's Government at this critical time if Canada's moral support for our policy were announced, I need not urge to you. An outspoken declaration might go far to alter the situation. The opinion of a great self-governing Dominion, such as yours, whose leader is not of British origin, could hardly fail to impress powerfully the gentlemen of the Volksraad and persuade them to adopt a more reasonable view of their position and ours. It might have the further useful effect of checking some of that sympathy and encouragement which the Boers are receiving from many in the United States who are, I gather, wretchedly informed as to the merits of the present dispute.

I shall hope to hear the moment intelligence reaches you.—Believe me, yours most sincerely,

J. CHAMBERLAIN.

Intelligence of a favourable character reached the High Commissioner in a few days; this he immediately conveyed to Mr. Chamberlain, who replied:

I did not receive your private letter of July 30 till my return from the House last night.

I am very much obliged to you for your action in the matter, and see the result in the papers this morning with the greatest possible satisfaction. I consider that the action of the Dominion marks a distinct stage in the history of Imperial relations.

With deep anxiety Lord Strathcona watched the events—by no means favourable for British arms—which marked the beginning of the war in South Africa. Much as he desired to see Canada's active participation in the struggle, he felt that it would be in the highest degree improper for him to attempt by word or act to force the Canadian Prime Minister's hand. He realised from the outset that in a war

of this kind fighters of the type of the Mounted Police of the Canadian prairies would be more of a match for the Boers than the sedulously drilled infantrymen of the English pattern. The idea grew upon him, and was fostered by the letters and public utterances of several Canadian friends who had great faith in the peculiar merit of Colonial troops. Chief amongst these was Colonel Sam Hughes, M.P., an Ontarian militia officer, who took his military duties seriously, and who strove on all occasions to imbue his comrades-in-arms and his colleagues in the House of Commons with his own ardent Imperialism.

In 1914, when the Great War broke out, Major-General the Hon. Sam Hughes, then Minister of Militia and Defence of the Dominion of Canada, gave even more striking proof of his lofty sense of Imperialism; and the great work which he did in organising and equipping Canadian troops for service in Europe was duly recognised when, on August 24th, 1915, the King received him at Windsor Castle and conferred on him the honour of knighthood, investing him with the insignia of a Knight-Commander of the Most Honourable Order of the Bath.

* * * * * *

Early in November, Sir Edward Grey's retirement from the contest for the Lord Rectorship of Aberdeen left the way free for Lord Strathcona's unanimous election to the office. After the nomination, the students had a procession, which came into contact with the police who drew their batons. To his deep concern, several students were injured and some arrests were made.

In the course of a leading article the *Daily News* observed:

> The new Lord Rector of Aberdeen may fairly be called the Grand Old Man of the Colonies. Lord Strathcona is seventy-nine, but he is still High Commissioner for Canada, a Governor of the Hudson's Bay Company, President of the Bank of Montreal, and a director of the Canadian Pacific Railway. No man is better able to trace the history of the Dominion, now more than thirty years old, and to

explain the rather complicated system of Federalism which has been carried out there with conspicuous success. He may remember the beautiful Horatian motto which Lord Derby, Prime Minister in 1867, proposed for the new State. It was not adopted, but it was as appropriate as it was classical. "*Juventas et patrius vigor.*"

Lord Strathcona was a very young man when Lord Durham went out to redress grievances and restore order. The loyalty of the French-Canadians, and the readiness of many among them to serve in South Africa, are striking and impressive facts of which nobody then dreamed.

By this time, in fact, the Canadian Ministry had decided to send a contingent of troops to the theatre of war.

Writing on this subject to Sir Wilfrid Laurier, Lord Strathcona said :

I fully appreciate the difficulties you had to meet in determining to send a contingent to South Africa. Happily the people here were so favourably impressed with the unmistakable and enthusiastic loyalty of the people of the Dominion as a whole that the strictures of one or two Quebec newspapers were hardly noticed.

Albeit, the momentary indecision about sending the troops made him secretly indignant. Even during his brief visit to Birmingham at the close of the black month of November, he was contemplating some plan by which he could personally assist in the cause of his fellow-countrymen in South Africa. Another political uneasiness lay on his mind—in reference to the much-vaunted Preferential Tariff. To Sir Wilfrid he wrote :

I share your disappointment that while there has been such a substantial increase in Canadian exports, the imports under the Preferential Tariff have, so far, fallen short of what might reasonably have been expected from the change.

To Mr. Chamberlain he wrote :

It appears as if we had almost been pluming ourselves upon a fiscal sacrifice which has not yet been made. This will make our sacrifices of another kind all the easier.

As a matter of fact, Imperial Preference, to work satisfactorily, could not possibly continue to be one-sided.

During the following month matters, so far from improving at the seat of war, became worse. A second contingent from Canada was announced as forthcoming. On the 18th Sir Wilfrid cabled :

It is important that the commander of Second Canadian Contingent be a Canadian officer, as in first contingent. Intimate this privately to Lord Lansdowne so that nothing may interfere with this plan.

Lord Strathcona replied :

I at once went to see Lord Lansdowne, and after one or two fruitless attempts, managed to get an interview with him yesterday afternoon.

His Lordship stated that in all probability the Canadian force might have to be divided, but he quite understood the importance of the matter from your point of view, and I left him with the understanding that he would look into it, and see that nothing was done to interfere with your suggestion being carried out. He is also to advise me further.

Nevertheless, there were, from the beginning, unsatisfactory features about the whole arrangement between the Canadian Government and the War Office. These need not be referred to here : they must be familiar to any who have perused the history of the war which brought about the downfall of the two Boer Republics.

Shortly after Christmas the form which Lord Strathcona's private assistance to the Empire should take had been resolved. He mentioned it first privately to Mr. Chamberlain, who heartily applauded, and then formally, on December 31st, to Lord Lansdowne, as Secretary for War. Briefly, his proposal was that four hundred men should be recruited in Manitoba, the North-West and British Columbia, unmarried and expert marksmen, at home in the saddle, and thoroughly efficient as rough riders and scouts, and that the force should be armed, equipped, and conveyed to South Africa at his own expense.

Not until January 13th did the War Office accept his offer. Lord Strathcona cabled General Edward Hutton,

then Commander-in-Chief of the Canadian Militia (or, as he himself preferred to term it, " the Canadian Army ") :

Have presented mounted regiment to Imperial Government for service in South Africa. Request you kindly raise same, mount same, equip same in Canada. Please draw on my account Bank of Montreal £150,000. My friend, Sir Edward Clouston, will provide all that is necessary.

It is no longer a secret that Lord Strathcona would have desired that his friend Colonel Hughes should have commanded this little force, but he resolved to leave all the arrangements in the hands of the Canadian authorities. Meanwhile, much as he regretted the publicity, the fact of his offer had reached Canada, and on the 13th he cabled the Premier :

Much concerned that matter has been allowed to become public prematurely through the medium of Ottawa press telegrams, and not, as I wished, without my name. But secrecy is no longer possible. Her Majesty's Government has now accepted my proposition, and it may be announced. Horses preferred from North-West to be purchased by McEachran in consultation with General Hutton ; men to be engaged on same terms as and equipped like Canadian contingents ; all officers and men to be passed medically under arrangements to be made with approval of Dr. James Stewart, of Montreal, and General Hutton. Imperial Government takes over force on arrival like Colonial contingents, returning men to Canada after campaign, but retaining horses, arms, and equipment, except clothing and necessaries.

This generous and unprecedented offer aroused the utmost enthusiasm in Canada and was warmly praised in Britain. The *Times,* in referring to it, remarked :

How immense is the reserve of strength on which England, in a just cause, can draw, is strikingly revealed in the munificent offer we have the gratification of recording to-day. It comes from one who is at once a Canadian citizen and a British Peer—Lord Strathcona and Mount Royal, the Agent-General for the Dominion. The estimated cost of this munificent gift is said to be a million dollars, or £200,000. There are not many countries in the world where individual citizens are to be found able and ready to prove their

patriotism on so splendid a scale. Such an offering to the common cause of the Empire would have been welcome from any quarter. It is doubly welcome from the representative of our greatest self-governing Colony. It is a proof how this war and these misfortunes, which, in the eyes of superficial continental critics, mark the beginning of our downfall, are in truth knitting us all together as we never were knit before. Blood and iron are doing their work.

Read fifteen years later, what added significance have these passages!

It was the opinion of many military critics that no more efficient rough-riders and scouts could be desired than these men of the saddle and rifle from the prairie. It would have been easy to raise in Canada ten times the number: and the hope was expressed that Lord Roberts, when he had them, would accord them the fullest opportunities at the Front.

This fresh illustration of the Canadian spirit was received with a far less lofty and condescending tone than was the case when the first Canadian contingent was offered and accepted.

On January 19th, 1900, Lord Strathcona wrote to Sir Wilfrid Laurier:

I now take the opportunity of writing to confirm the various cablegrams that have passed between us respecting the organisation of my little force for South Africa, and at the same time to thank you most cordially for the time and trouble you are devoting to the matter.

I was very grateful indeed to you for your willingness to place the organisation of the Militia Department at my disposal, for the raising of the Force, the purchase of the horses, arms, and equipment, and the conveyance of the corps to South Africa.

In the first place, my impression was that, as the force is to be a personal one, it might be desirable to deal with it as far as possible in that manner, so that it should be considered not as being in any sense of an official character. I recognised naturally that it would be difficult to carry out the arrangements without the help of the Government and Militia Department, but I thought the object I had in view would be better achieved if arrangements could be made

for General Hutton to act practically as my representative in the matter, and to have charge of the detailed arrangements, of course in connection with the Minister of Militia, and not in any way independent of Dr. Borden.

You will, I know, believe that in mentioning my desire that the matter should be regarded entirely as non-political I had no idea of making any reflection upon the organisation of the First and Second Contingents. The expression was merely an incidental one, on the line of my idea that the Force should not be official in any way in its character. Had I not been convinced thoroughly that no considerations of a political nature had been allowed to intervene in connection with the Government contingents, I should hardly have been disposed to move in the matter at all.

You will understand, I am sure, that the principal concern I have is that the Force to be raised should be thoroughly efficient in every way, that the men and the officers should be the most suitable that can be obtained for the services for which they are likely to be required, and, further, that the equipment and armament should be as perfect as possible. I am sure that this could not be done on better lines than those that have been adopted with the Government contingents.

With regard to the officers, I should like, of course, to have the names of those who are nominated submitted to me for approval, with any particulars about them that may be available, and there will be no delay on my part in reply to any communications I may receive in this branch of the subject.

As I mentioned in one of my telegrams, I am quite willing that the Force should be increased to 450 or 500 men, if this is found to be practicable, and if a suitable ship can be obtained, to convey the number of men that may be selected within these limits, and the necessary horses. I am strongly of opinion that the men and horses should go in one ship.

It will be understood, of course, that the men will be paid at the same rates as the men forming the Government contingents. While I shall be responsible to that extent, and for the expenses connected with the purchase of the arms, horses, equipment, and of the transport, no other responsibility will attach to me, as the Force will be taken over, like the Government contingents, by the Imperial Government on its arrival in South Africa.

Unhappily, Lord Strathcona had not been informed of the strained relations which existed between General Hutton and the Laurier Ministry, which were now at all but

breaking point. Moreover, General Hutton's rather too frank expression of his opinion of the merits of the Colonial Militia as compared with British regulars, had angered several of the leading militia officers, amongst them Colonel Hughes. The latter, in protest, had addressed an open letter to the Commander-in-Chief which General Hutton considered "unpardonable." Yet there were many passages in this letter of manifest truth and force, as well as of eloquence. The upshot was that its writer found himself unable to obtain employment with the first or second contingents.

It was finally through Lord Strathcona's mediation, when General Hutton arrived in England, that Colonel Hughes was persuaded to take a step towards a formal reconciliation, which resulted in his being given a command in South Africa. He felt keenly disappointed that he was not to command the Strathcona Horse; and an offer of a captaincy in that troop he had thought it proper to decline.

To General Hutton he addressed a full and unqualified apology:

DEAR GENERAL HUTTON,—I desire to make full and ample apology to you for certain letters written by me to you during recent months, letters written under excitement caused by the belief that I was to be debarred from participating in the deeds of a Canadian contingent in the Imperial service, should one be sent to the Transvaal —a project which I, as the proposer, for a long time felt deeply at heart. . . . Two or three incidents, occurring practically on one day, which I, from the view-point of one more familiar with constitutional law rather than of British military practice, believed to bear upon my honour and rights as a citizen, caused me to express sentiments that are foreign to my belief in the form in which they seem.

I most respectfully wish to retract all letters written in what, to your military instinct, may seem insubordination, but which were not so meant by me.

Believe me, dear General Hutton, very faithfully yours,

SAM HUGHES.

Colonel S. B. Steele

Meanwhile, an excellent officer for the force had been found, another Ontarian, Colonel S. B. Steele, who had already distinguished himself in the Mounted Police.

Two months after the first Canadian contingent had sailed for South Africa [wrote Colonel Steele] I heard that it was likely that a mounted corps would be sent to the war. I went to Halifax, and had been there only two days when Sir Frederick Borden, Minister of Militia, telegraphed for me to return to Ottawa and raise and command a corps of mounted riflemen for Lord Strathcona, who was sending a regiment to South Africa at his own expense. I was to be allowed to take with me any officers and men of the Mounted Police who had volunteered for the service and could be spared from their duties, and I could have the service of the remainder to recruit the corps.

One squadron was to be raised in Manitoba, another in the North-West Territory, and the third in British Columbia; the whole of the saddlery, clothing, transport wagons, and many other articles of equipment had to be manufactured. The horses had to be purchased at the very worst time of the year and were to be cow-horses —that is, animals trained in round-up and all range work. Recruits were not wanting; one could have got thousands of the best men in Canada. I had an offer from 600 first-class Arizona stock men. They were prepared to supply their own arms, pay for any class of rifle that I desired, furnish their own horses, spare and riding, if I would take them for Strathcona's Horse. I had, of course, to decline, but it was clear proof of what the Empire can expect in time of trouble. One could have had the assistance of thousands of the finest horsemen in the United States.

The recruiting was completed on February 8, and was most satisfactory. On the 14th, we reached Ottawa, and were quartered in Lansdowne Park Exhibition Ground. The regiment was cheered at every station *en route*. On March 6 I paraded the regiment for inspection of the Governor-General. Our space was limited, and the snow, being above the horses' knees, prevented me from doing more than march past in sections of fours; but the corps looked well.

The corps was at last complete and ready to move at a moment's notice, all the result of one month's work. During these strenuous days I had much encouragement from Lord Strathcona, who wrote me several kindly letters, impressing upon me that I was to spare no expense in providing for the comfort of the men and the efficiency of the regiment. I could say that in every respect I had carried out

his wishes to the fullest extent and with due regard to economy, and, thanks to his liberality and the active assistance I received from all concerned, I am sure it would have been impossible to find a better equipped corps in the world.

On March 17th the Strathcona Horse embarked upon the *Monterey* at Halifax, numbering 28 officers, 512 other ranks, and 599 horses.

The following cable message from Lord Strathcona which, when published on board, was received with hearty cheers in every part of the ship :

Very sorry I cannot see my force embark. Have transmitted to Dr. Borden gracious message I have received from Her Majesty, which he will publicly convey to you and the men under your command. Have also asked him to express my best wishes to you all, and that you have a pleasant voyage, every success, and a safe return. Appointments of all officers gazetted ; they will receive their commissions from the Queen. Hope to forward them to reach you at Capetown, where you will find a letter on your arrival. Report yourself to the General Officer commanding Capetown.

STRATHCONA.

Excellent as were the arrangements on board for the comfort of all ranks, the voyage was not a pleasant one. "No sooner," wrote Colonel Steele, "did we get out into the open sea than, in spite of the fact that it could not be called rough, the vessel rolled heavily, a motion which she kept up on the slightest excuse for the greater part of the trip. After a few days one of the horses developed pneumonia, and from day to day many went to feed the sharks. The greatest care was taken, but it was of little avail, the disease had to run its course, and it was a pitiful sight to see so many exceptionally fine animals thrown overboard."

On April 10th the *Monterey* arrived and anchored in Table Bay, and the commander found letters from Lord Strathcona, "all containing useful advice. He sent out 150 field-glasses and wire-cutters, whilst money was placed to my credit to purchase lassoes, extra tea and tobacco."

Colonel Steele describes how, while the Strathcona Horse were on the march, Sir Redvers Buller rode up with his staff, and passed in and out through the column of troops, expressing himself very much pleased. He said: "I knew Lord Strathcona very well; when I was in Winnipeg on the Red River Expedition of 1870. It was arranged with him that I should go west to distribute the Queen's proclamation; but it turned out that I was required with my regiment, and Butler went instead. A very good thing, too, for he wrote a very good book describing his journey, which I could not have done."

* * * * * *

This is somewhat in advance of our narrative. The quarrel between General Hutton and Dr. (later Sir Frederick) Borden led to a demand for the former's recall. Mr. Chamberlain had in vain endeavoured to heal the breach.

February 13, 1900.

DEAR LORD STRATHCONA,—Thanks for your letter of the 10th inst. telling me of the message which you have received from Sir Wilfrid Laurier about General Hutton.

I can only say that I deeply regret that after my promise to endeavour to settle the matter to the satisfaction of the Dominion Government, they should have thought it necessary to send an official application for General Hutton's recall. Their action will necessitate my sending an official reply going into the whole history of the relations between the officers appointed by the Imperial Government and the Dominion Ministers.—Yours very faithfully,

J. CHAMBERLAIN.

"What is the matter with your Ministers of Militia in Canada?" asked the Colonial Secretary. "Is there no one of our Imperial officers with whom they can work harmoniously? I confess frankly I am disappointed. I thought Hutton and Dr. Borden would get along well together."

Alas, four years later, as we shall see, there was to be a further rupture with another British commanding officer.

On that occasion Lord Strathcona privately deplored the part politics had always played in militia affairs in Canada. "I'm afraid it will take years or some great national danger to put our military service on a plane above party interests," he said.

On February 17th, 1900, Lord Strathcona wrote to Sir Wilfrid Laurier :

The position with regard to General Hutton as shown in your confidential letters of the 30th inst., received yesterday, is a most regrettable one, and gives much concern both to Mr. Chamberlain and Lord Lansdowne.

The experience with the generals sent out to command the militia has been anything but a satisfactory one, and ever since the retirement of Sir Selby Smyth, five in succession, including General Hutton have been recalled as being, for one reason or another, unacceptable to the Canadian Government.

On getting your confidential telegrams I communicated on the subject with Mr. Chamberlain, who made a suggestion to the War Office of appointing Hutton for service in South Africa. It may be impossible at the moment to find an officer in every way qualified to be his successor.

He assured me that not a moment was being unnecessarily lost in carrying out your views concerning the transfer of the General for service elsewhere. I communicated to him your suggestion about Lake.

I called on him yesterday, and he then said that they would not be able to send Colonel Lake to replace General Hutton, who, I presume, will soon be here on his way to South Africa.

That same day the High Commissioner received a cable from Sir Wilfrid :

Concerning the official dispatch for the recall of General Hutton, we would have been all along willing to have a confidential communication. The demand for official communication did not come from us. That communication when received may be kept in abeyance to be withdrawn, unless General forces whole question before Parliament.

In the following year the whole question was unhappily forced upon the Canadian Parliament, when it was conclusively shown that the Government could hardly have

overlooked the indiscretions of the Commander-in-Chief in certain public speeches reported in the newspapers, without sacrificing its dignity or impairing the prerogative of the Minister of Militia.

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The surrender of the Boer General Cronje at Paardeberg caused much satisfaction in Canada, and apparently suggested to Mr. Cecil Rhodes that another Canadian battalion might be employed in Rhodesia. He communicated the suggestion to Mr. Chamberlain.

On March 9th, 1900, Sir Wilfrid Laurier cabled to Lord Strathcona :

> The Colonial Secretary proposes recruiting in Western Canada for special service in Rhodesia. This force to be raised at a special rate of pay, and, as we understand from an agent here, practically for service of the Chartered Company. If anything of the kind was to be done, it will be necessary to have an official dispatch from Colonial Secretary making unmistakable distinction between proposed force and those already sent to South African War. If such distinction is clearly marked, and the purpose of force stated in express terms at the time of recruiting, then there would be no objection to course proposed. Without such clear distinctions, object of recruiting might be misconceived and create serious embarrassment. See Colonial Secretary, discuss subject and advise us.

Lord Strathcona at once communicated this message to Mr. Chamberlain, saying that he understood the suggestion would be adopted if the matter were proceeded with, but that owing to difficulties the subject would probably be dropped. The Colonial Office sent him, in confidence, a copy of a telegram which had been addressed to the Governor-General on the 2nd inst., to the effect that the Government would not proceed with the proposal.

* * * * * *

Lord Strathcona much desired that his friend Sir Charles Tupper, the leader of the Opposition in Canada, should be present at the departure from Halifax of the Strathcona Horse. This, however, proved impracticable.

OTTAWA,
March 18, 1900.

MY DEAR LORD STRATHCONA,—Your kind cable of the 9th inst. gave me a great deal of pleasure as far as it referred to myself, but I was very sorry to hear that you had been so ill. I would have been very glad to comply with your wishes that I should see the Strathcona Horse off at Halifax, but I learned that Borden was going, and it was very difficult for me to leave the House at such a critical period of the Session. I had the pleasure of expressing the feeling of the people of Canada upon your munificent act, which has done so much for our Dominion during the Debate on the Address, and of speaking to your contingent on the grounds at their quarters, and at Parliament Square, where they were reviewed by the Governor-General.

If you will accept it, I have no doubt to the joy of all Canadians you will be the successor of His Excellency, nor do I doubt the British Government will mark your valuable services to the Crown by making your peerage descend to your daughter and her son.

We are, I think, on the eve of a general election, the result of which I feel confident will be our return to power. I will not say more than to beg you on no condition to vacate the High Commissioner-ship before a general election takes place.

Do not fail to take care of your health, upon which the whole country is so anxious.

With kindest regards to Lady Strathcona and yourself, I am, always, yours faithfully,

CHARLES TUPPER.

On the same day Sir Charles also wrote:

OTTAWA,
March 18, 1900.

MY DEAR MR. CHAMBERLAIN,—I am sure you will be satisfied I made no mistake either from a Canadian or an Imperial standpoint to suggest that a peerage should be conferred upon Sir Donald Smith, and I feel certain that you will excuse me for saying that all Canadians will rejoice if his great services to the Crown at an important crisis are recognised by arranging that his peerage shall descend to his only child, the Hon. Mrs. Howard. She is the wife of Dr. Howard, of 31 Queen Anne Street, who is the first Canadian who took the fellowship of the Royal College of Surgeons. His father was the most eminent physician in Montreal, and a professor in the McGill University. Mrs. Howard would grace any position, and her family of sons and daughters are bright and interesting.

His Ardent Wish

You can imagine what it would be for Lord Strathcona, like myself, so near the close of life, to feel that his grandson, Donald Howard, would one day wear his title. It is right you should know that no person living knows I have made the suggestion to you, and I am quite sure you will appreciate the spirit in which it is made.

You, beyond all your predecessors, have established the principle that service to the Crown shall receive the same recognition in the outlying portions of the Empire as in the Mother Country.

I was glad to find, when addressing a great meeting on the 5th at Boston, in favour of the Patriotic Fund, a reference to yourself and your policy on the Transvaal was received with the wildest enthusiasm.

With best wishes, I remain, yours faithfully,

CHARLES TUPPER.

It had been Lord Strathcona's ardent wish, although Providence had denied him a son, that he should be the founder of a family bearing his name and continuing in the path he had marked out and measured so long. Sir Charles Tupper knew this, and it was a source of real satisfaction to him when, a few months later, his suggestion was carried out, a new Royal Patent being granted in accordance with his wishes.

COLONIAL OFFICE,
March 31, 1900.

DEAR SIR CHARLES TUPPER,—I have to thank you for your letter of the 18th, and the suggestion which you made in it. No one more appreciates than I do the character and services of Lord Strathcona, and I shall be delighted if I can forward his wishes in any way. As a matter of fact, however, when the peerage was conferred, the subject of its continuance to a daughter was considered, and it was found that there were great difficulties in the way of such an unusual grant. It is possible that these difficulties may ultimately be surmounted, and you may count on my seizing any opportunity of securing the desired result.

I am, yours very faithfully,

J. CHAMBERLAIN.

What these "great difficulties" were, Lord Strathcona knew only too well. He knew, moreover, that they were founded upon errors—errors which he himself was too

proud to explain away. None the less, he was delighted to think that they might now be removed through the unsolicited offices of his friends.

To Sir Charles Tupper he wrote :

53, Cadogan Square, S.W.
May 4, 1900.

My dear Sir Charles,—Your letter of the 22nd April, having under cover copy of a letter from yourself to Mr. Chamberlain, of the 18th March, and of his reply to one of the 31st of that month, has this moment reached me, and I must send you a word of grateful thanks for all your great kindness to me and mine to catch to-day's mail.

The kindness which actuated you in writing to Mr. Chamberlain as you did, I appreciate infinitely more than I would the fulfilment of the object you had in view in doing so, and I need only say that I am truly grateful to you. My wife and daughter will be not less so, but let me say that I would never have moved a finger, or said one word in furtherance of that object, however much I might desire it for my daughter and her children.

It is true that when a peerage was offered me a word was said on the subject, but the thought was then dismissed from my mind, and in anything I may have said or done, has not recurred to me since.

In a letter you most kindly wrote to me bearing on the reception in Ottawa and Montreal to my little corps of mounted men, you brought up the subject in the kindest terms, but I had no expectation you would have gone further, and what is said in your present letter is therefore, with its enclosures, a pleasant surprise as showing that in one quarter at least on this side there is an appreciation of what little I may have endeavoured to do for the benefit of Canada.

Again I thank you. I am not sure I have yet expressed to you how sensible I am of all you did in the send-off of my little battalion from Ottawa, but I hope you know how deeply I feel all the kindness and attention shown to them by yourself and other friends.

We were much grieved to hear of the serious accident to Lady Tupper, and we earnestly trust she is now quite recovered.

With our kindest regards for her and yourself, and in much haste, I am, very sincerely yours,

Strathcona.

To Sir Wilfrid Laurier, a fortnight before, he had written :

It was a great regret to me not to have undertaken my intended visit to Canada this past winter, but as I had a sharp attack of

pleurisy the doctors thought it more prudent I should not venture the crossing of the Atlantic till later on ; but I still look forward to being in Canada early in the summer, as I have quite regained my accustomed health.

The very valuable service of Archbishop Bruchesi and Principal Peterson in their efforts to heal the breach so unfortunately caused by some of the McGill students in their overzeal and enthusiasm in connection with the war in South Africa, to which you refer, cannot be too highly appreciated by all who have the true interests of our country at heart.

Both His Grace and the Principal have been good enough to write me on the subject, the letters of the former having only just come to hand. To Dr. Peterson I had already written, and I shall not fail to write to the Archbishop expressing my deep sense of the obligation we owe him for having so successfully helped to avert a racial cleavage than which, I am of entirely of opinion with you, nothing could be more deplorable as affecting the future of the Dominion.

I need not say to you how your own efforts in the cause of the unity of the Empire are appreciated both here and throughout the Queen's Dominions.

During the Boer War Lord Strathcona was in constant receipt of extraordinary letters, many of them anonymous, giving him advice and information as to events connected with hostilities. Some of his correspondents, especially those in remote parts of the Empire, even in Canada, laboured under a wrong impression as to his own personal status. Letters addressed to General or Colonel Lord Strathcona were not infrequent. One which greatly entertained him spoke of his " well-known bravery and skill on the battlefield, of which the newspapers were now full." This he forwarded to Colonel Steele, marking it " wrongly addressed." Another was hardly so complimentary. It was from an old Hudson's Bay employee, who wrote :

I have been reading your doings in South Africa with great surprise. Little did I think in the old days that you would ever make a soldier. Peace, I thought, was more in your line.

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In South Africa, during 1900, Strathcona's Horse performed much useful service. When in October Lord Dun-

donald parted from them on his return to England, he addressed them thus :

> I have never served with a nobler, braver, or more serviceable body of men. It shall be my privilege when I meet my friend Lord Strathcona to tell him what a magnificent body of men bear his name.

Later, as they entrained for Pretoria, Lord Dundonald stated that he was very proud of Strathcona's Horse. From the time the regiment joined the brigade under his command it had covered, he said, much ground, and had undertaken and successfully carried out many dangerous duties.

Major-General Barton also wrote to their commander in November :

> I cannot speak too highly of the practical and effective manner in which the duty assigned to your splendid corps was carried out by yourself and all under your command yesterday, and I have specially mentioned this in my report to the Field-Marshal Commanding-in-Chief. I only regret that circumstances prevented my supporting your movements by advancing further with the main body.

Lord Kitchener, Commander-in-Chief in South Africa, bidding farewell to the regiment on January 15th, 1901, publicly thanked them for their services, and stated that they had marched through nearly every part of the Transvaal and Orange River Colony, that he had never heard anything but good of the corps, and that they would be greatly pleased if he told them of the number of letters he had received from general officers all over the country asking for " Strathcona's Horse."

The regiment sailed from Capetown on January 21st. All hands had been refitted with new clothing from head to foot, and new hats sent out by Lord Strathcona, who, on their arrival in the Thames, sent them a telegram of welcome.

Subsequently, His Majesty King Edward reviewed Strathcona's Horse, thus addressing them :

Address from King Edward

Colonel Steele, officers, non-commissioned officers and privates, I welcome you to these shores on your return from active service in South Africa. I know it would have been the ardent wish of my beloved mother, our revered Queen, to have welcomed you also, but that was not to be ; but, be assured, she deeply appreciated the services you have rendered, as I do.

It has given me great satisfaction to inspect you to-day, and to have presented you with your war medals, and also with the King's colours.

Be assured that neither I nor the British nation will ever forget the valuable service you have rendered in South Africa.

Lord Strathcona gave a " magnificent banquet, modestly called a luncheon," to the whole corps. Many leading persons were present, including the Earls of Derby and Aberdeen (ex-Governors-General of Canada), the Earl of Dundonald, Major-General Laurie, M.P., Major-General Hutton, and many other officers of the Army, prominent Colonial statesmen and gentlemen interested in the Dominion and other oversea portions of the Empire. Lord Strathcona, surrounded by his guests, received each officer and private at the entrance of the banqueting hall, and afterwards proposed the health of the regiment. The occasion of his own toast being drunk produced the wildest enthusiasm, the officers and men springing to their feet and making the roof echo with their ardent cheering.

The names of Sir Redvers Buller and Lord Dundonald, who in the absence of Lord Roberts took his place on Lord Strathcona's left, were also heartily received, the men rising to their feet to honour them.

Before their return to Canada Lord Strathcona tendered further hospitality to the officers of the regiment. He received his guests in the great drawing-room of the Savoy Hotel. Colonel Steele had the place of honour on his right; Earl Roberts, the Lord Mayor of London, Lord Lansdowne, the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Mr. J. Chamberlain, Sir Redvers Buller, Lord William Seymour, Sir James Ferguson, and about thirty others were present.

So delighted was Lord Strathcona with the exploits and soldierly conduct displayed by the Canadians in South Africa, that on one occasion he cabled out the whole of a *Times* leading article to Sir Wilfrid Laurier.

Nevertheless, he was much concerned over the circumstance of the short enlistment of the Canadian contingents —a single year only—and his impatience was great when six out of eight companies refused to accede to Lord Robert's request to prolong their term of service by a few months. Had it been possible, he would himself have wished to interfere and appeal to the men; but reflection showed that it was best not to call too much attention to the incident. He contented himself with thus explaining the matter to the Commander-in-Chief:

> We in Canada have been so long isolated and absorbed in our own material development that it will take us some time to recognise fully the gravity of Imperial defence outside our own borders. But the temper of the Canadian people is elastic, and will be found to fit the situation should it ever arise in the future. They will only need to be impressed by its gravity to come forward to meet it. This war, if only a beginning, has proved that.

CHAPTER XXV

FISCAL AND OTHER PROBLEMS (1900-1909)

LORD STRATHCONA may well have felt embarrassed by the overwhelming character of his reception when he visited Montreal in the summer of 1900. On his arrival at the station he was greeted by a deputation of prominent citizens and 1,200 students of McGill University, whose exuberance was not at all dampened by a steady downpour of rain. The interval of waiting for the Chancellor was employed in pulling down signs, upon which the magic name "Strathcona" was chalked, while a baker's cart was "held up" and deprived of its load of loaves, which, soon rendered sodden by the rain, made excellent missiles for those whose enthusiasm was thought to require a stimulus. When at last the train steamed into the station, the deputation, headed by Sir William Van Horne, boarded the car and welcomed Lord Strathcona, while the McGill students, shouting and cheering, waved their hats and called for three cheers, hundreds taking up the chorus, "For he's a jolly good fellow!"

When the object of this demonstration descended the steps of the station a mighty roar went up, and it was with difficulty he made his way to his carriage, from which the horses had been withdrawn and to which ropes were attached by the students. Torrents were descending, but the welcoming multitude, wet and covered with mud, with broken umbrellas, and boots and trousers past recognition, evinced no diminution of ardour. They emitted the college yell; they called again and again for cheers for Strathcona and "Strathcona's Horse"; and while the bells of St. George's Church pealed out a welcome, the carriage was drawn

along to Lord Strathcona's residence in Dorchester Street.

Arrived at his residence, and touched at such evidences of a popularity his prime had never known, Lord Strathcona addressed the students. He said:

I feel, deeply, the kindness of your reception and its heartiness, and I hope that I shall have the opportunity of meeting you all during my short stay here. The reception which you have given me to-day will remain vividly imprinted on my memory during the remainder of my life, however long or short that may be.

Everywhere he went, and every day of his brief sojourn in Canada, the heartiness of his reception was the same.

The Toronto Board of Trade gave him a banquet at which about four hundred representative gentlemen of the Province of Ontario were present. "The gathering," commented the *Globe,* "was a great tribute to the philanthropic nobleman who had done so much for Canada and the Empire."

We are told that when he rose to speak the guests and spectators in the galleries cheered for several minutes, and the band played "Rule Britannia." The principal theme of his speech was the bond of union between the Mother Land and her Colonies, now cemented by the blood their sons shed together on the soil of South Africa.

He said:

When we speak of a united Empire we speak of the Dominion and the other Colonies coming closer and closer together. May we not express a hope, too, that in our Dominion there may be less provincialism amongst us? Whether in Ontario, Quebec, the Maritime Provinces, the Prairie Provinces, or in that great Western country which was once called a sea of mountains, and which we now know to be a rich sea of mountains, we ought to feel in all our legislation the desire to come together in everything that is good for the Dominion at large.

A few years ago people from Canada and the Colonies were regarded in England as merely those to whom it was well to be civil—very worthy backwoods people, but hardly worth while crossing the sea to recognise. We know that our neighbours of the United States were

thought highly of, and seen everywhere in society; but was it so of ourselves from Canada and the other Colonies, as we had a right to expect? How is it to-day? To be a Canadian citizen or a citizen of any other Colony is to have the warmest good wishes of all the best people of the Mother Country.

The feeling that has gone forth towards the Colonies is not, I feel assured, an evanescent one. While we are the first among the nations within the Empire, we are glad to know that there is another true-born nation which is to take its place alongside of Canada in a very few weeks. The grandson of Her Gracious Majesty, the Queen, goes there to assist in opening the new Parliament, and I trust that the occasion will not be lost of having that same member of the Royal Family, as representing Her Majesty, come also amongst us on his return.

We should now be regarded as one people, one great Empire of Englishmen, no matter what our mother tongue may be. There is one agency which I trust within a very short time we shall see as an established fact, and which I believe will be a factor in that direction: I feel that we may be confident that we shall, at the close of 1902, have cable communication direct from Canada to Australia. While we have but little business connection with the southern Federation, doubtless it will go on increasing to great proportions, as there is much in each country that the other needs.

It was during this visit that he formally opened Royal Victoria College. Lord and Lady Minto were present, as well as hundreds of Montreal citizens and many students of McGill University, at a reception which exceeded in size and magnificence any private entertainment previously given in Montreal, and even surpassed that given by Lord and Lady Strathcona at the Imperial Institute, London, in the summer of 1897, at which all the Canadians then in the English metropolis were invited guests. On this occasion Lady Minto unveiled the statue of the Queen, executed by Princess Louise, Duchess of Argyll, at the entrance to the college. Miss Oakely, as warden of the college, then presented Her Excellency with an immense bouquet of roses, tied with the college ribbon.

On May 25th, 1901, Lord Strathcona wrote to Miss Oakely:

The account you are able to give of the Royal Victoria College, and those who have the good fortune to be under your care in it, shows, indeed, a satisfactory record for the session which has just closed, and I have no doubt that as time goes on, the College will be increasingly useful to the people of Montreal and Canada in training up well-educated gentlewomen.

* * * * * *

The illness and death, on January 21st, of the universally beloved and revered Queen Victoria profoundly affected him. He and Lady Strathcona were present in St. George's Chapel, Windsor, at the funeral service, where he was heard to remark several times to acquaintances: "Think of it —Queen Victoria is dead." To him the event meant more than to most. His memory could travel back to the London of the first year of Victoria's accession, when, as a fresh-faced youth with all his career before him, he had lingered in the streets hoping to be "rewarded by the spectacle of Her Majesty."

At a "special court" of the Governors of the Royal Scottish Corporation, held in order to pass a resolution of sorrow on the Queen's death, of sympathy with the Royal Family on their bereavement, and congratulation to His Majesty King Edward VII. on his accession to the Throne, Lord Strathcona seconded the resolution, which was proposed by Lord Rosebery.

In April, before a distinguished audience at the Imperial Institute, he read a paper on "Canada and the Empire." The Duke of Argyll, in his happiest vein, introduced the lecturer. Everybody, he said, knew what Lord Strathcona had done; and the Duke, being a Scotsman himself, maintained that only a Scotsman could have done what Lord Strathcona had done; and only a Scotsman who had had a long residence in Canada, benefited by her air, her institutions, and by the experience acquired on her soil. The Duke was particularly grateful to Lord Strathcona in that he had become an Argyllshire man, and had brightened with his presence a place which formerly had rather dismal

associations. Glencoe was associated with the great cruelties practised upon some of those who were not up to what might be called the " Imperial " ideas of their time. The Duke pointed out how matters had changed, and the locality was now a centre of light and leading in the Imperial feelings of the day.

As to the depth and sincerity of Lord Strathcona's Imperial policy, the following letter, written to Sir Wilfrid Laurier on May 2nd, 1901, bears further testimony :

The other day, Mr. Chamberlain asked me to see him about some matters which could be better explained verbally than in writing.

First, he referred to " The National Monument to Queen Victoria." It was evident from what he said that it would be very gratifying to the King and to the Government here that Canada should show an interest in the matter by contributing to the fund being raised for it, the amount of the contribution being of much less consequence than the assurance that the Dominion entered cordially into the idea of there being one grand memorial in London, joined in by every part of the Empire. I am sure that your co-operation in this will be regarded with the greatest appreciation here.

The other matter suggested is that a certain moderate sum should be placed at the disposal of the Governor-General to enable him adequately to entertain the Duke and Duchess of Cornwall on their visit to Canada. Indeed, I believe that Lord Minto has given Mr. Chamberlain to understand that his personal means do not permit of his doing what he would wish in this way.

About these somewhat delicate matters to deal with, I write you frankly, as I know you will not misunderstand the spirit in which I bring them to your notice, and I also feel sure you would like to have placed before you what is passing in the minds of the people here on such subjects.

While I have the pen in hand, let me say that just before the Duke and Duchess of Cornwall left for Australia, their reception in Canada happened to come up in conversation with Mr. Chamberlain, on which I said that, if quite agreeable to the King, and of course also to your Government, I should be glad to assist in the welcome of the Royal party in Montreal, to which the response was that anything I might do in that respect would be acceptable.

Please understand that I do not wish unnecessarily to put myself forward, but if you entirely concur, I shall be pleased to go to Montreal

in September to aid as best I can, either by accommodation and entertainment or otherwise in my house.

Throughout this year he had still been agitating the scheme of a fast Atlantic steamship service. As for that other matter of the Pacific cable, it had happily reached finality. The cable was being rapidly laid, and would soon be one of the Empire's assets. But the line of twenty-five-knot steamers was still far away. In this connection he wrote :

The Canadian Government realises fully that the St. Lawrence route should be made as safe as human foresight can make it. The insurance rate for Canada is from seven-and-one-half to eight guineas, as against three to New York, Boston and other United States ports. Thus we are heavily handicapped, and the Government should, and, I am convinced, will do all in its power to improve the route if this is possible and if such drawbacks exist. There is no sentiment in this question of insurance ; it is purely a business matter. Competition is too keen nowadays for any sentiment to intervene, and if it were safe to take lower rates you may be sure there would be plenty of offers.

If the Government sees its way to grant a subsidy which would meet the views of Sir Christopher Furness, I have no doubt he would be willing to tender for the service. He is firmly convinced that only a first class service will be of any use ; a fast service—a service that can compete with the United States lines.

On the question of a Canadian terminal, I cannot but think that the port must be the one giving the shortest sea passage from land to land, and I should think some point in Cape Breton is the place, if it affords good harbour accommodation, and passengers, perishable and certain other kinds of freight can be taken easily on board. That is the only way we can secure a thoroughly good, efficient and up to date service.

I have always taken a very great interest in this question ; I have been working at it for years, and I have always maintained that it was a necessary adjunct wherewith to maintain the reputation of our transcontinental route to the East. The Canadian Pacific are taking steps to accelerate the speed of their Pacific steamers, and we must have a fast service on the Atlantic.

The launching by Mr. Chamberlain of his great scheme of Tariff Reform for the United Kingdom caused Lord Strathcona the greatest satisfaction. " Although," he told

the Colonial Secretary, "I cannot, from my position, publicly support you, nor even hint in public here at my sentiments, you know what those sentiments are." He held the view strongly that Free Trade in England was building up the prosperity of Germany and other nations and retarding, and perhaps for ever preventing, the commercial unity and therefore the real unity of the British Empire.

On May 16th, he wrote to Sir Wilfrid Laurier:

Mr. Chamberlain made a remarkable speech at Birmingham, and the report of it, as given in the *Times* this morning, I enclose with this, also a report of Mr. Balfour's reply to a deputation which waited on him yesterday on the question of the corn and flour duties.

It is very evident that the people of the United Kingdom are not yet quite ripe for any measure of protection, but there is certainly a strong and growing feeling that there ought to be a preference to the Colonies.

A fortnight later he wrote again:

Mr. Chamberlain assured me that should pressure to impose duty on flour be irrestible he will insist on drawback for Canada.

He thought it just possible that the Chancellor of the Exchequer might have to give way to the insistence for a duty on flour, but he very decidedly said that if so, Canada must be exempt.

I have since had some conversation with him on "the new departure," and I have sent you the text of his speeches and all pamphlets on the subject which have appeared in the principal London papers, so need not here trouble you as to anything further about it, than to say that Mr. Chamberlain has evidently come to regard the position from your point of view that it is the wish of the Imperial Government to formulate its own policy and then to approach the Colonies on the subject.

In a very short time, he said at the annual Dominion Day Banquet, Canada would be able to provide every pound of bread stuffs required in Britain, and with a strong Navy the Mother Country would be proof against the pinch of necessity. Whilst Canada has been glad to give a preference to the Mother Country, there was at that time a good deal in the air regarding preferential relations within the

Empire. Many who had been working in the past for that end now saw a gleam of sunshine before them, and he hoped such a result would be obtained without depriving themselves of their trade with foreign countries. Was there any reason why in their domestic affairs they should not be one great family throughout the British Empire ?

Surely it was only reasonable that the different parts of that Empire should exhibit a preferential feeling towards each other. Was it proposed, he said, that they should stumble at once into something very different from what they had now ? Was it not asked that they should consider the situation carefully, and then do what was thought best for the whole of the King's dominions ? In Canada they had no fear of the outcome of the inquiry, but whatever happened, the loyalty of the Dominion would remain undisturbed.

When someone suggested to him that there might be some resentment in America at any preferential treatment of Canada; especially if American industries suffered thereby, he asked :

> Why should there be any resentment ? Americans are business men. Between their own States there exists an arrangement for the most complete mutual benefit, while they interpose a tariff against the outside world. Why should they resent the establishment between the States of Greater Britain of a mutually benefiting arrangement ? Or why should they resent the withdrawal on the part of Great Britain of advantages which she has voluntarily given them if she does so in pursuit of a policy of advantage to the constituent parts of her Empire? We do not resent any part of the domestic policy of the United States. Why should her citizens, as business men, resent any change in our domestic policy ?

But was not Canada herself apprehensive of the results of a change from present conditions? Did not the Government believe, for instance, that the disturbance of fiscal relations with the United States might result in the aggravation of friction in questions of policy, such, for example, as the Alaskan Boundary question ? In short, was there

not a feeling in Canada that any change might be a change for the worse, and that it would be better to leave matters alone ?

To these questions Lord Strathcona replied that he did not believe in that expression as the feeling of Canada. "I do believe that throughout the Dominion there exists, on the other hand, the greatest confidence in the statesman who is now at the Colonial Office. And I think that Canada believes in him, and trust to his judgment and ability."

* * * * * *

During Lord Strathcona's annual absence in September of this year, Sir Walter Peace, Agent-General for Natal, suggested that the representatives of the self-governing Colonies should unite in tendering Mr. Chamberlain an official banquet on his retirement. In this he wished Canada to take the initial steps. If Canada approved, Sir Wilfrid Laurier would be asked to cable the various Colonies to instruct their representatives to co-operate.

When approached in the matter, Sir Wilfrid Laurier replied :

> The Canadian Government continues firm in the conviction that preferential trade on the lines laid down at the Colonial Conference last year is the best policy in interests of the British Empire, and we warmly recognise and appreciate Mr. Chamberlain's services as Colonial Secretary, especially his endorsement of that policy. At the same time, we are strongly of opinion that the proposed demonstration would be ignoring His Majesty's advisers at this moment as appearing to take sides in what has unfortunately become a party question in England and a crisis which is now submitted to the judgment of the British electorate.

This seemed sound doctrine and practice. Nevertheless, Lord Strathcona did not fail to avail himself of this and every opportunity to express publicly his appreciation of the services of the retiring minister.

It is no disparagement to his predecessors to say that he has done more than any man to promote Imperial unity and the development of the Empire. During the term of his office many events of importance

bearing upon the Colonies and the Empire have taken place. I would refer to the Conferences of 1897 and 1902; and it is gratifying to learn that such gatherings are likely to be held in the future. I would also point to the Federation of Australia, the introduction of preferential tariffs in Canada and South Africa in favour of British imports, denunciation of the German and Belgian treaties, the laying of the Pacific cable, the establishment of penny postage within the greater portion of the Empire, the abolition of the sugar bounties, the inclusion of Colonial stock among trustee securities, and the visit to South Africa—a precedent which we hope will be widely followed in the future. All these constitute a record of which he and the Government may well be proud. He has always been most considerate and most appreciative in regard to all matters affecting our Dominion of Canada.

He repeated these sentiments on several other occasions, notably in February, 1904, when he declared:

Mr. Joseph Chamberlain is a great man and a great statesman. The Colonies look upon Mr. Chamberlain as their very best friend, and one who, in the high position he has held, has done more for the Colonies, and is doing more for the Colonies, for the Mother Country, for the Empire, and for the general good, than any other man.

Lord Strathcona's action was not to pass without criticism; and he took an early opportunity to reply to the attack made on him in the Canadian House of Commons. By one member he was accused of exceeding his rights as Canadian High Commissioner, by practically allying himself with one of the British political parties and campaigning with Mr. Chamberlain. If the charge were true, and if he had been guilty of allying himself with Mr. Chamberlain, it is only fair to say that in so doing he would have acted exactly as the vast majority of his fellow-Canadians would have been proud to have him act. But the truth is, he was always very careful to remember his semi-diplomatic position in London, and to keep himself clear of British party politics.

He retorted that, while a very great admirer of Mr. Chamberlain, he had never in any way been connected with that statesman's fiscal crusade, and that in his position as

representative of Canada he knew no politics, British or Canadian. A leading Montreal journal declared :

> This is an entirely satisfactory reply to the criticism in question. No attitude could be more proper. Canadians would generally not want him to conceal his personal belief in Mr. Chamberlain's pro-Canadian policy ; but they will agree with him that his delicate and highly important work in London can best be done from a position of party neutrality.

* * * * * *

His visit to Canada that year, if not marked by such scenes of tumultuous enthusiasm, was again very pleasant, and awoke many happy memories. He was greatly impressed by the extraordinary manner in which Canada had grown and prospered. It was not easy, he remarked in the course of a public speech, for him to believe that it was all real, and not merely a dream.

> It disposes me to rub my eyes sometimes, and sometimes to wonder if I am really awake. Who could have thought fifty years ago of the transformation which has taken place ? Seeing what has been done in the past by the people of Canada, it is an earnest, and a good one too, that they will still be up and stirring, and they will not be contented only with what they and their fathers have done, but that they themselves will still continue to do their utmost, and that they will instil into the minds of their children, and the children again of these, that there is an inheritance which is theirs, and that it would be a humiliation to all of them not to do their utmost to sustain it, and still to press forward.

From time to time rumours of Lord Strathcona's retirement appeared in the newspapers. In the autumn of 1903 these rumours brought forth an official denial from Hon. Mr. Fielding in the Canadian House of Commons. General cheers greeted the Minister's statement, and there was in England many an echo of congratulation. The burden of eighty-three years now rested upon his shoulders, yet he had no sooner returned to England than he at once plunged into the heart of things Canadian, especially the scheme not yet realised for a fast Atlantic line.

* * * * * *

Of the many admirers of the Earl of Dundonald, who had gone out to Canada to fill the post formerly held by General Hutton, Lord Strathcona was not the least, and he deplored the political partisanship which, in the Dominion, too often ruled in the appointment of militia officers. Of Dundonald, Colonel Hughes, M.P., said in the Canadian House of Commons:

> One of his ancestors was the famous admiral who commanded the British Frigate, *Navarion*; another fell at the capture of Louisburg in the eighteenth century; and the General himself is distinguished in every part of the world where he has served. The Strathcona Horse and other Canadian Corps followed him again and again to victory in South Africa, and I can readily understand the annoyance that an officer of his standing should feel, on coming out here, with the best interests of the Empire at heart—with the best interests of Canada at heart, because the interests of Canada are the interests of the Empire—at having to put up with this thing from week to week.[1]

None the less, it was clear, as the facts came out, that Lord Dundonald had been imprudent. Indeed, in his protest against what he conceived to be an evil he had cast prudence to the winds. The result was an Order-in-Council relieving Lord Dundonald of his duties. Regarding this, Sir Wilfrid Laurier wrote as follows:

OTTAWA,
August 10, 1904.

MY DEAR LORD STRATHCONA,—His Excellency the Governor-General has forwarded, by this mail, to the Secretary of State for the Colonies, copy of an Order-in-Council concerning the actions of the Earl of Dundonald, whilst he was acting as General Officer Commanding the Canadian Militia. I enclose herewith copy of the same Order-in-Council, for your Lordship's information. I deem it expedient that you should be in possession of all the facts connected with this unfortunate affair, so as to be in a position to discuss it in all its aspects with Mr. Lyttelton, and also, if need be, with Mr. Arnold-Forster.[2]

Up to the present time, I did not deem it advisable to trouble your

[1] *Parliamentary Debates*.—June 10, 1904.
[2] Rt. Hon. Hugh Oakely Arnold-Forster became Secretary of State for War in 1903.

Lordship with this case, otherwise than to send you copy of the Order-in-Council relieving the Earl of Dundonald from his command, and to ask you to communicate it to Mr. Lyttelton.

The document which I now enclose shows that in the exercise of his functions as General Officer commanding the Canadian Militia, the Earl of Dundonald gave direct orders to his subordinates to conceal from the Minister of Militia certain information which he was bound to place before him. This document throws a flood of light on the manner in which the Earl of Dundonald understood and practised his duties towards the Minister under whom he had accepted to serve, and, indeed, it is impossible to explain how an honourable man, holding the rank and position of the Earl of Dundonald, could justify such an action. The least that can be said of it is that it was an act of disloyalty to his chief, and it may give the cue to other acts of his violation of the King's regulations, which eventually forced the Canadian Government to take the only course with which such deliberate insubordination can be treated.

I abstain from further comments, but I would be obliged if you would interview first Mr. Lyttelton,[1] and then Mr. Arnold-Forster, and assure both of them that we regret, as much as they do themselves, that the action of the Earl of Dundonald left us no alternative, and that the course which we took was dictated by the necessity of maintaining the discipline of the force, and of vindicating the authority of the Government.

In reply, Lord Strathcona wrote to Sir Wilfrid Laurier in September from Glencoe:

There has been much delay in carrying out the instructions conveyed to me in your letter, but this was unavoidable, as both the Secretary Lyttelton and Mr. Arnold-Forster had left London before its receipt, the former for Scotland and the latter for the Continent.

Neither of these gentlemen intend being in London until October, and it was not without some difficulty I at length succeeded in seeing both of them in Scotland.

As to the substance of the conversation I had with Mr. Lyttelton and Mr. Arnold-Forster with regard to the Lord Dundonald incident, I discussed the matter most fully with both. The former considers that the action of the Commandant, as shown in report of the Privy Council on the 4th August, most reprehensible, and would not recommend his having any preferment or appointment at present. The Secretary for War says the Commandant affair does not affect the Imperial

[1] Secretary of State for the Colonies since 1903.

Government so immediately as it does the Canadian Government, whose servant he was, and who dealt with his case by dismissing him.

We may, I think, feel assured that they greatly disapprove of the action of Lord Dundonald, and there is no fear that anything will be done either by the War Office authorities or the Colonial Secretary in giving preferment or employment to the late Commandant of the Canadian Militia for some time to come. Mr. Arnold-Forster informed me that he has called upon Lord Dundonald for an explanation of his conduct.

Colonel Hughes vigorously championed the cause of his friend Lord Dundonald, as vigorously as he had denounced General Hutton four years before. In the course of a letter, Colonel Hughes asserted :

The dismissal of Lord Dundonald by Sir Wilfrid Laurier's Government and the appointment of a Canadian Major-General of the military forces of the Dominion, if resented by the Imperial Government, may sunder the tie that binds Canada to the Empire.

Happily, the Imperial Government did not resent. It was fortunate that the Imperial tie should be strengthened rather than weakened by the arrival that year of so strong, ardent and intelligent an Imperialist as Earl Grey, who came to take up the Governor-Generalship, which Lord Minto had, after six notable years, relinquished for the great post of Viceroy of India.

Writing to Lord Strathcona on September 13th, 1904, Sir Wilfrid Laurier observed :

I enclose a letter to Lord Grey, our new Governor-General, which I would respectfully ask you to deliver to him personally. I desire that you would at the same time express to Lord Grey that his selection by His Majesty for this most important position has been received by all classes in the country with very great satisfaction.

I have suggested to Lord Grey that it would be extremely desirable that there should be the shortest possible interreign between Lord Minto's departure and his arrival in Canada.

Lord Minto intends to sail on the 21st of October, but that date is not fully determined. But whenever Lord Minto sails for England, my opinion is very strong that Lord Grey should also forthwith sail for Canada. I urge this point because after the departure of Lord

Minto, until the arrival of his successor, matters of routine alone could be attended to, all important questions would have to be deferred, and sometimes great prejudice might arise.

Two months later, Lord Lansdowne sent the following to Lord Strathcona:

Owing to the death of a near relative, I find myself with great regret prevented at the last moment from enjoying the hospitality of the Canada Club.

It would have been delightful for me to join in doing honour to a Governor-General elect, who, as an old friend, I regarded with sincere affection, and for whom, as a public man, I entertain feelings of the greatest respect. Twenty-one years ago I was just arriving in Canada at the commencement of a term of office which I have never ceased to look back upon as one of the happiest and most instructive periods of my life. I recall with pleasure the circumstance that in those days Lord Grey, who was amongst our visitors, already showed keen interest in the Dominion and its affairs. He is, in my opinion, greatly to be envied, and, if I may be allowed to say so, I think the Dominion is to be congratulated on the appointment of one who stands so high in the esteem of all who know him.

With Hon. Alfred Lyttelton, Mr. Chamberlain's successor at the Colonial Office, the High Commissioner was on the most cordial terms. During his term the long-desired boon of penny postage to Canada was established, and at a Canada Club dinner in 1905 Lord Strathcona expressed the earnest hope that before long the Imperial Government would extend the same preference to the postage of newspapers from the United Kingdom to Canada. It would be very greatly appreciated indeed, he said, if Canadians could have their newspapers sent at a preferential rate—a rate lower than that which had been given to foreign countries. He regarded that as a matter of some importance; for they had coming to them from their neighbours, cousins, and, happily, he could also say, their warm friends in the United States, the papers of that country by thousands. They were glad to see the telegrams and news in those papers, but they would prefer to have their own papers from the Mother Country to tell them everything that was

of interest to that country, and also to them as members of the same Empire. He trusted that before long they would have that privilege.

This boon was at last granted in 1908, and has been of incalculable advantage to British sentiment and a knowledge of things British in Canada, although it is to be feared that it has not yet exerted a due effect upon the tone of the native newspapers, which, as a prominent Canadian complained to Lord Strathcona, "technically and literately are inferior to those of any other part of the Empire."

Year after year, at Dominion Day banquets, at which he always presided, he sounded the same note, of which neither he nor his hearers ever tired—the note of jubilation at Canada's material triumphs and confidence in her future prosperity.

In 1906 he said :

> The progress of Canada since confederation has been miraculous. In every respect, throughout the reign of Queen Victoria it has progressed. The trans-continental railway, for which many prophesied disaster at the time of its construction, is soon to be supplemented by at least one other similar road. In agriculture, trade, industry, and mining the country has gone ahead by leaps and bounds, the railways have become steamship owners, and soon I hope to see a Liverpool passenger transported to the Pacific in eight or ten days.
>
> It seems only a few years since that by a liberal subsidy Canada obtained a railway across the continent, and there had been a prevalent opinion that the enterprise would be most disastrous for those who took it in hand. Last year the gross income of the Canadian Pacific Railway reached £12,000,000 sterling. We now feel assured that there will be abundant work not only for the Canadian Pacific, but for two and perhaps three other trans-continental railways. In a few years I hope there will be steamers crossing from the United Kingdom to Canada in three-and-a-half or four days, so that travellers from this country can reach the Pacific Ocean in eight days, going on thence to Japan and other Asiatic regions, with which Canada is coming into close connection commercially.

Touching the latter project, Lord Strathcona never hid his own confident belief in the commercial success of a

twenty-five-knot service between Britain and Canada, devoted to passengers alone, and his dissatisfaction with anything falling short of that standard. In other words, the most experienced and, one might add, the most cautious of Canadians never once wavered in his assurance that Canada would not be satisfied with a service in any respect inferior to the best that is provided on the New York route. Lord Strathcona even expressed his readiness himself to subscribe £100,000 towards such a service from any British or Irish port that could be justified as the best port for the service, and that it were under thoroughly capable and experienced management.

In February, 1907, he said :

I should be very glad if there were a faster service. The present services are very good, and are doing very well, but we want it faster yet. The faster we can go the more we will come together on both sides. There is a real need for a faster service. The numbers of Canadians who come to this country seem to justify the demand. In July last I saw at one time in London no fewer than 1,200 Canadians. When we see so many people crossing from the Dominion, we are naturally desirous of securing the best facilities for their transit across the Atlantic.

The " All-Red Route " was a phrase adopted for the sake of brevity to describe a great scheme of improved inter-Imperial communications which Sir Wilfrid Laurier proposed at the Imperial Conference of 1907, and which the Imperial Government accepted.

The President of the Board of Trade (Mr. Lloyd George) speaking to the Conference on May 6th, said :

The problem that has been suggested to us by Sir Joseph Ward and Sir Wilfrid Laurier and other speakers, is to reduce, as far as possible, the natural disadvantage of distance under which we suffer. The prompt and the cheap delivery of foods, perishable articles, and raw materials is a very big factor to the consumer and manufacturer, and it is these commodities which are so largely produced in the Colonies and so largely required in this country. The development and acceleration of inter-Imperial communication for business purposes would undoubtedly be a movement in which all parts of the Empire

would share for their mutual benefit. It would result not only in increased facilities for the marketing of goods and for stimulating the development of trade, but in giving important opportunities to the movement of individuals from one part of the Empire to another. By bringing the distant parts of the Empire nearer to the centre it would make the Empire more compact. All that is an essential element in trade.

In a letter to Sir Wilfrid Laurier, Lord Strathcona said :

The All-Red project would be a great thing, not only for Canada, but also for all parts of the Empire, and I earnestly hope to live to see it an accomplished fact. The establishment of an eight-day service between Liverpool and Vancouver, which would be a result of it, would cause large quantities of foreign capital to flow into the country. Many people who are now deterred, by the length of time necessary for the journey, from going so far west as the coast, would with the establishment of the new service be led to do so, and the sight of the great resources of the prairie regions would lead them to invest their capital in Canada rather than in foreign countries. It is merely a matter of cost.

There is no reason why the thing could not be done if the money were forthcoming, and I think it is a thing worth spending money to accomplish. We spend a great deal on mere local improvements, and here is something that would be a great benefit to not only Canada, but to the whole Empire as well. I think that in such a case we should be very much more willing to disburse the necessary funds. I feel quite confident of its ultimate success. A definite offer has been made by a steamship company to undertake the fast service on the Atlantic, as a part of the project, for a subsidy of £500,000 a year, and the Canadian Government are prepared to bear half of this subsidy, £250,000 a year.

On April 26th, 1907, Sir Wilfrid Laurier wrote :

I have thought a good deal upon the subject of a new mail service between England and Canada, and connected with it a service between Canada and the Orient. This is one of the most important matters that we have had to deal with in many years, and I would attach much importance to your active co-operation in the same. I am strongly of the opinion that if you were to interest yourself with this service it would be made a complete success.

The " All-Red Route " interested Lord Strathcona to the close of his life. He never wearied of discussing it; and

therefrom hangs a story—the jest of the eminent surgeon called in to examine his heart and arteries, who tapped him significantly in the cardiac region and murmured: "We must attend to the All-Red Route, my lord."

* * * * * *

It was in the autumn of 1906 that there occurred the truly remarkable Aberdeen University centenary celebrations, in which, as Chancellor, Lord Strathcona was the foremost figure. On the first day he led a great procession through the streets of Aberdeen to the temporary hall erected at his expense. There he received the congratulatory addresses handed in by representatives of many universities and learned bodies. There again he entertained at dinner the same representatives and all the graduates of the University, who returned for the celebrations, and representatives of the undergraduate body.

"It is easy," writes Miss Hurlbatt, "for me to recall the persistent voice that succeeded in penetrating to the recesses of that great hall, and to call up again the scene as with quiet dignity he presided over that colossal dinner-party. It was my good fortune to be one of only two ladies at the group of high tables (there were, of course, women at the graduate tables, for the University opened its doors to women in 1892), and from a near vantage point to watch the face of our host. It was he who received King Edward in the great courtyard of Marischal College, when the latter came to declare open the new buildings that had been erected as the gift of Lord Strathcona himself."

"Before Lord Strathcona became Chancellor," wrote Sir William Robertson Nicoll, "the Chancellorship was a mere name. The Chancellor of my time took no interest in the University, and did nothing save to meddle once in a foolish way with the Rectorial election. Lord Strathcona's liberality has been unbounded, and he has taken the keenest interest alike in the erection and equipment of the new buildings and in the ceremonies of their opening. He built

for the occasion a wooden hall which accommodates between 4,000 and 5,000 people. There was genuine and wise kindness in this action. For one thing, it enabled many to have a share in the celebration who could not otherwise have been present. For another, it gave Lord Strathcona an opportunity of entertaining some 2,500 guests. If it had not been for this, no satisfactory provision could have been made for the multitudes who had a real claim to share in the festivities. Lord Strathcona is indeed a wonder. Though he bears the burden of eighty-six years, he is as erect as ever, as keen, as alert, as eager as the youngest."

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In the autumn of 1907 the unfortunate anti-Japanese riots which broke out in Vancouver caused Lord Strathcona to have several consultations with the Foreign and Colonial Offices. As a result, Lord Grey sent the following dispatch to the Mayor of Vancouver:

His Excellency the Governor-General has learned with the deepest regret the indignities and cruelties of which certain subjects of the Emperor of Japan, a friend and Ally of His Majesty the King, have been the victims, and he hopes that peace will be promptly restored and all offenders punished.

Although the troubles subsided, Lord Strathcona saw that all was not yet well in this direction. He was much interested in the proposals which reached him from one of his correspondents who had studied the whole question. This letter he forwarded to Sir Wilfrid Laurier:

While it is futile to exaggerate the mob riots with Japanese at Vancouver, there can be little doubt that a repetition of them on a larger scale would jeopardise the status of the present Government of Canada, and England's present alliance with Japan. But racial strife in British Columbia, or indeed in any part of the Dominion, would, of necessity, by estranging capital and checking the advent of immigrants, become most serious in arresting the development of Canada.

The fact that Canada has no army or navy of its own, while Japan in its armaments ranks as a first-rate power, might be counterbalanced by the influence and power of England but for two things: first, the

actual alliance of England with Japan, which enables England to denude the Pacific of her battleships, *i.e.* the indispensable in maritime war; and next, England's determination not to interfere with the internal affairs of her Colonies, and to retain only a nominal suzerainty.

This non-interference should enable Canada to make (with England's knowledge) a commercial treaty with Japan to the benefit of both countries, and an essential part of such treaty would be the regulation and restriction of Japanese immigrants, both as to number and system of supervision.

White men refuse to compete with Asiatic labour, and their present condition of life and habits freely justify them if, indeed, they are right in saying, " this is the white man's country and we mean to keep it so." The Japanese retort, " You forced *your* way into *our* country, now we only assert our rights to do likewise."

To reconcile interests and to find a *modus vivendi* both for Canadians and Japanese, I would foster manufactures (where coal permits) in the first instance, and so give employment and profit to Japanese, who might otherwise work in the lumber trade and fisheries as they do to-day. But the white man should alone own and work the soil, unless, in the course of time, the Canadian Government is willing conditionally to permit the Japanese to become British subjects and make their allegiance to the British Empire. They would then, of course, have votes.

Furthermore, to remove prejudice and racial feeling, I would establish a Canadian-Japanese College, for general and technical knowledge, where all boys would be on the same footing.

Ever most tenacious was the High Commissioner of the dignity and attributes of the office of High Commissioner. He disliked intensely the prospect of Canada's representation at the seat of Empire being frittered away into subordinate cliques. Yet he was made constantly aware of the desire on the part of the Agents-General of the different Provinces to raise their status and consequence, which, of course, could only be at the expense of the higher office. Some years ago, Sir Richard McBride, the Premier of British Columbia, intervened on behalf of his Agent-General, Hon. J. H. Turner, whose personal claims were, in addition, regarded as somewhat more favourable, in that he had formerly himself held the office of Premier of the Province.

Writing from Victoria, British Columbia, on January 4th, 1908, he said :

As you are no doubt aware through conversation with Mr. J. H. Turner, he has felt that it would be advisable were the office of the Agent-General to receive official recognition from the Imperial Government as it would be of assistance in his work were such the case. I discussed the matter fully with him while he was here last autumn, and we both felt that such recognition would be beneficial to his position and would meet with your approval.

Consequently the Executive Council to-day passed an Order in Council requesting the Dominion Government to bring the matter to the attention of the Secretary of State for the Colonies with a view of securing the desired official recognition of the Imperial Government. I would be pleased if you would kindly use your good offices to assist.

Lord Strathcona wrote to Sir Wilfrid Laurier deprecating the proposal :

I cannot but think that any such action as that recommended by Mr. McBride would be a retrograde movement and opposed to the spirit of the federation of the Provinces of the Dominion, and one which, if acceded to, might readily tend to confusion and even to embarrassment.

And in this view he was upheld by the Dominion Government. He subsequently wrote to the Provincial Premier :

Let me say at once that I have always been most willing and desirous, both officially and personally, to further the interests of British Columbia in common with the other Provinces of the Dominion, by every means in my power ; but if Mr. Turner was under the impression that I had ever given expression to views favourable to an extension of the powers of the Provincial representatives in London, he was certainly under a misapprehension.

As you are well aware, under the terms of the British North America Act, there is no provision for such representation as is sought, and, in my view, any extension of the present principle could only operate unfavourably.

Doubtless you have given much attention to the matter, and will be well aware of the Constitutional difference between the States of Australia and that of the Provinces of Canada. However attractive the status of the representatives in London of the several Australian Governments may appear to be, in practice it can hardly be said to have worked satisfactorily or smoothly, and in this matter Australia is

confronted by an awkward problem, as yet unsolved, but undoubtedly one which might be productive of great embarrassment, and I do not think the interests of Canada would be promoted by retrograding to the condition of affairs which our Australian friends have to contend with and which they regard with anything but equanimity. . . .

Of course, the matter is one for the Government of Sir Wilfrid Laurier to decide, and we shall doubtless be made aware, in due time, of the course it may be determined to follow.

What that decision was may be gathered from the following passage in Sir Wilfrid's subsequent letter:

Let me say at once that I altogether approve of your attitude in this matter and I absolutely share the views you have expressed to Mr. McBride.

When King George V.—who at that time, of course, was Prince of Wales—visited Quebec in 1908, on the occasion of the Tercentenary celebrations, there was some anxiety lest the visit should be marred by any untoward incident. More than ordinary precautions were deemed necessary. Police officers were sent to Quebec more than three weeks ahead of the Prince, so that they might have time to pick up any available information.

Such precautions, no doubt, were very necessary, for, as Sir Edward Henry, Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police, declared:

Under ordinary conditions no one would be apprehensive of an outrage taking place on Canadian soil, but as Quebec is within comparatively easy distance of certain centres in America where the Clan-na-Gael flourishes, an organisation very embittered against all British institutions, we must not overlook the possibility of the Prince's visit being deemed a suitable opportunity for some form of hostile demonstration by some of its members.

This is the view we have independently formed, and as the same view is held by our Consulate General in New York, it is one that cannot be lightly put to one side. We think it highly advisable, therefore, that all police officers should be on the alert so as to be informed of the arrival of American emissaries, with the object of keeping them under really effective supervision, thereby frustrating the execution of any plan they may have formed.

Luckily, nothing happened; but Lord Strathcona, on his visit to Quebec, could not help being reminded of former occasions when fear of the Fenians was uppermost in the minds of Canadians.

In the summer of 1909 Lord Strathcona made an extended tour of Canada with two of his grandchildren—Mr. Donald Howard, who is heir to his mother, now Baroness Strathcona, and Miss Howard, now Mrs. Kitson. They travelled from coast to coast, and made many side expeditions. At Winnipeg he was most desirous to act as host for the British Association for the Advancement of Science, which held its meeting there in old Fort Garry, the scene of so many years of his labour. Instead, however, he figured rather as a guest.

Rarely in history has a populous city paid so enthusiastic a tribute, even to one of its sons, as was then paid to Lord Strathcona. Something must be allowed for the natural exuberance of the youthful West, but when all is conceded, it was still a unique manifestation of personal regard.

On the evening of his arrival the streets in the vicinity of the station were choked with humanity; his carriage had a military and musical escort, and along the route, two miles long, from the station to Government House lit up by electricity, were cheering multitudes. For several days the population was *en fête* in his honour. Welcoming banners hung across the leading thoroughfares—thousands daily wanted to catch merely a glimpse of the white hair and benignant features of the object of their adoration. Bevies of maidens waited on him with flowers. At the banquets and public receptions his appearance was hailed by deafening cheers, followed by a wonderful silence when he opened his lips to speak. Every movement—nay, almost every gesture of the patriarchal figure was chronicled in the newspapers. Day succeeded day, and still the populace of Winnipeg did not tire of acclaiming "Strathcona!"

Forty years before he had entered Fort Garry almost

furtively to become the prisoner of Louis Riel. On the site of Fort Garry there is now upreared a noble building, many storeys high, bearing its name, with corridors of marble and replete with costly furniture and every luxury. How great the contrast a night's lodging here to the wretched accommodation which, in 1869, had been the lot of Donald Smith!

Leaving Winnipeg, several visits were made to parts of the West, including British Columbia, where his uncles, John and Robert Stuart, had long laboured. During one of these expeditions in the Okanagan Valley, he incurred what might easily have been a serious or fatal accident to a man of his 88 years. A wagonette and pair of horses overturned down a hill, and literally shot the four or five occupants, including Lord Strathcona, out on to the bank and field. The driver had both his legs broken. Lord Strathcona was quite unhurt, excepting for a cut and strain of the hand and arm, which he carried in a sling for some weeks afterwards.

When Canada's High Commissioner had been in office in the United Kingdom for a full decade, greatly to the advantage both of the Empire in general and Canada in particular, it occurred to some members of the Anglo-Canadian community that the event should not be allowed to pass without commemoration.

On April 21st, 1906, the Duke of Argyll wrote to the author of this work:

> It was a happy thought of yours to mark Lord Strathcona's decade as High Commissioner by a testimonial from Canadians living in London, and I hope it will be taken up. He has done so much for others that it will be a change for others to do a little something for him.

A meeting accordingly was held, and the idea was duly "taken up." But it was not until the autumn of the following year that the Duke of Argyll, acting on behalf of the subscribers, presented to his lordship a beautifully executed centrepiece illustrative of the various phases of his

career. It was recalled with interest that the Duke first met Lord Strathcona thirty years before, when the Mr. Donald Smith of that day was strenuously engaged in building the foundation of trade and commerce and civil administration in what was then the untamed wilderness of Manitoba, of whose first Provincial Legislature he was a prominent member.

In this year (1907) he made a splendid and significant gift for the benefit of the young people of the Dominion, and, indeed, for the Dominion itself—a gift the effect of which immediately became manifest when the Great War broke out. It was announced in Parliament by Sir Frederick Borden, the Minister of Militia, that Lord Strathcona would contribute $250,000 to create a fund of $10,000 a year for the encouragement of physical and military training in the public schools of the Dominion. The announcement was received with applause from both sides of the House, and by unanimous resolution the thanks of Parliament and the people of Canada were tendered to the donor.

In conveying the gift, Lord Strathcona wrote to Sir Frederick Borden :

> While I attach the highest importance to the advantages of physical training and elementary drill for all children of both sexes, I am particularly anxious that the especial value of military drill, including rifle shooting for boys capable of using rifles, should be constantly borne in mind. My object is not only to help to improve the physical and intellectual capabilities of the children by inculcating habits of alertness, orderliness and prompt obedience, but also to bring up the boys to patriotism, and to the realisation that the first duty of a free citizen is to be prepared to defend his country. The Dominion at the present time, and for many years to come, can hardly hope to be able to give so long a period of training to her military forces as by itself would suffice to make them efficient soldiers, but if all boys had acquired a fair acquaintance while at school with simple drill and rifle shooting, the degree of efficiency which could be reached in the otherwise short period which can be devoted to the military training of the Dominion forces would, in my opinion, be enormously enhanced.

Photo: F. A. Swaine, New Bond Street, W.

SIR ROBERT BORDEN

In Favour of National Service

"The first duty of a free citizen is to be prepared to defend his country"—that is the lesson he aspired to teach. And that is why his admiration and sympathy were—so far as his official position would allow—given fully to his friend, Lord Roberts, who, down to the day of his death, courageously and unflinchingly endeavoured to impress his fellow-countrymen with a sense of this primary duty.

CHAPTER XXVI

THE CLOSING DAYS (1910-14)

IT was not altogether unnatural, or indeed unexpected, that, after enjoying so long a term of public favour as the most popular of the Colonies, there should come a reaction in some quarters, and that Canada should suffer occasional detraction. Lord Strathcona was so jealous of Canada's good name that every such attack filled him with indignation.

"I don't care what they say of myself," he once told Mr. Alfred Lyttleton. "I am accustomed to abuse and having my character assailed, although I get less and less of this as I grow older. But they must not abuse Canada while I am alive to defend her."

So long had he been sounding the praises of the vast Dominion, of her mountains and prairies, her railways, her wheat fields, her institutions and the loyalty of her people, that he grew to believe in every line of every stanza that he sang. The praises of Canada on a stranger's lips gave him as much pleasure as if of himself or of his own family circle. This high ideal of patriotism he exacted from others.

Once a London journal published an unusually violent attack on Canada. At first he contemplated taking legal action, and afterwards of visiting the office of the paper and insisting upon an immediate disavowal of the libel.

To Sir Wilfrid Laurier he wrote:

> The article is an instance of journalistic depravity much to be deplored, yet, so far, at any rate, I can come to no other conclusion in regard to the matter than that to take any official action would simply serve the ends of the proprietors of the journal without any corresponding benefit to Canada, and would only encourage them to proceed still further in their libellous course.

I am bound to add, however, that a feeling of indignation in regard to the articles has been aroused in Canadian circles, and should you, while concurring generally in my view, think that some action ought to be taken, I shall be glad to hear from you by cable. The trouble is that Mr. ——, of course, knows well that a nation cannot be libelled in the legal sense, and that we are thus debarred from taking the only measures to which a gentleman would be amenable.

He himself was constantly being dragged into the arena of party politics, and more than once he was obliged to issue a denial of views attributed to him in the newspapers. For example, in December, 1909—the year in which the House of Lords rejected the Budget—he addressed the following to Sir Wilfrid Laurier :

I find by Press reports that my name is used in reference to the present political contest in the United Kingdom—it is well known in this country that I am never interviewed—I have not in this instance departed from this rule and have had no interview with anyone. If I had any opinion to express on the present contest I would claim the privilege of doing it in my own words, but I would consider it absolutely out of place for me to say or do anything which might be considered ever so remotely as an interference in any party contest now before the electors of Great Britain and Ireland. Please cause this to be published in such manner as you think best.

For some time past—ever since his memorable and triumphal progress through the West—he had been far from enjoying his usual health. The injury to his right arm caused by the accident at Vernon prevented him from using a pen. Moreover, as he wrote to Sir Wilfrid :

I am still very deaf from the effects of a concussion caused by the report of a cannon fired at a short distance from my ear some months back.

He decided that the time had at last come for him to resign the High Commissionership, and he wrote to this effect to the Prime Minister. Sir Wilfrid begged him to reconsider his decision. In reply, he sent the following on April 8th, 1910 :

For your most kind letter of the 15th, in acknowledgment of mine of the 5th March last, I thank you very much, and very cordially do I appreciate the terms in which you refer to my desire to be relieved as High Commissioner for Canada on the 1st July next.

I have felt it the more desirable that the date of demitting my present charge should not be left altogether indefinite, as I am still inconvenienced and suffering somewhat from the effects of the accident to my right arm at Vernon, in September last, and of a subsequent slighter injury to the other arm from a motor collision here.

It is, however, needless for me to say that I am truly grateful for your consideration and kindness to me now as on all occasions, and in deference to your wish that I will reconsider the question, I would suggest that instead of the 1st of July my resignation should take effect at the end of the fiscal year, 31st March, 1911, or with the close of the present calendar year, 31st December, as may be most convenient for you in appointing my successor.

A few weeks later King Edward died. "The loss," wrote Lord Strathcona on the day of the King's death, "sustained by the Empire by the death of His Majesty would have been heavy in any circumstances, but, coming as it does at this juncture of affairs, it is indeed a great calamity." For Edward VII. he had always a great personal regard, and this was reciprocated by the Sovereign, who had long been deeply interested in the career of "Dear old Uncle Donald," as he affectionately spoke of him.

"Here comes Uncle Donald," His Majesty once exclaimed, seeing the High Commissioner approach at a garden party, but without his wife, "but where is 'Our Lady of the Snows?'"

Between Queen Alexandra and Lord Strathcona the bond of personal affection and of veneration on the one hand, and of a chivalrous loyalty on the other, was very noticeable.

For some years, owing to the "tariff war" following on the denunciation in 1897 at Canada's instance of the existing commercial treaty, relations between Germany and Canada had not been friendly. This era seemed now over, and in October, 1910, Lord Strathcona again visited Ger-

many to take part in the Berlin celebrations which marked the centenary of the leading university of Germany. Every university of mark throughout the world sent its representative; to few, if any, was more honour paid than to the nonagenarian who combined the Chancellorship of McGill with the High Commissionership for Canada in Europe. Lord Strathcona was the bearer of cordial greetings from the Canadian university to the seat of learning which began its career when the Prussian capital was in the occupation of French troops. As the Chancellor of Aberdeen University Lord Strathcona had also had the pleasing task of laying a memorial wreath sent by that University upon the statue in the Wilhelmsplatz of Field-Marshal James Keith, one of Frederick the Great's officers, a Scotsman who, from 1711 to 1715, was a college student at Aberdeen.

Being, moreover, the senior representative present, he was selected as the spokesman for the universities of the United Kingdom and the Empire as a whole, and on their behalf conveyed to the Berlin authorities a message of cordial greetings and congratulation. He could not but be aware, while in Berlin, of the striking prepossession of the governing classes for war, even in the midst of profound European peace. He expressed the hope in one of his letters that the military skill and resources of the German people would never be put to the test. While he had confidence in the power and wish of the Emperor for peace, he thought that after him any danger there was lay with the Junker party, led by the Crown Prince. But these hot-headed young men would grow mature, and, after all, he argued, it was obvious that Germany's best interests would be served by peace and industrial activity.

On a wintry day at the beginning of January, 1911, he journeyed down to Westerham, in Kent, in defiance of his doctor's orders, to participate in the unveiling by Lord Roberts of the statue of General Wolfe. For an hour he stood bareheaded on a platform in the open air, occasionally

swept by sleet; afterwards he spoke at a public luncheon, proposing Lord Roberts's health:

To-day we have Canada before us all in this memorial of the services rendered by Wolfe 150 years ago. It is, perhaps, somewhat humiliating to us that those services have not been so recognised earlier, as they ought to have been, for did not Wolfe's victory give to Great Britain the Dominion of Canada as the first nation within the Empire?

He added:

Lord Roberts was himself one of those great captains who have given us an Empire within an Empire in India—and the name of Lord Roberts will ever continue to be with us a household word.

Deeply did he regret the fatal step taken by the Laurier Ministry early in 1911 in connection with commercial reciprocity with America. He saw instantly that, regarded as Canada's national policy, the step was a backward one. Yet he strove loyally to put the best face on the matter of which it was capable.

Canada is free—he pointed out—to do anything she may desire by legislation, in respect of British preference. The agreement does not prevent her in any way from doing that. It is not in the form of a treaty; but assurances of concurrent Legislation are mutually given, and while the reductions made by Canada are comparatively small, those made by the United States, owing to their high tariff, are very considerable.

I repeat that the agreement does not, and will not, prevent Canada from making any preferential arrangements with the Mother Country or with any of the overseas Dominions which she may consider desirable.

In no sense will the ultimate effect of the agreement be to weaken the bonds which unite Canada to the Empire. The arrangement on the Canadian side applies to articles which are obtained mainly from the United States, and only in one or two classes from England.

Nevertheless, as the Liberal plan of campaign developed, an opposition arose throughout the length and breadth of the country to the Taft-Fielding proposals, amongst which nearly all his former commercial associates in the Dominion were numbered. Yet, even then, he permitted no expression

of opinion of his to appear. In March, 1911, he indignantly cabled to Sir Wilfrid Laurier :

> The statement attributed to me by Mr. Goodeve in the House of Commons, Ottawa, on the 9th inst., as reported in to-day's London *Times* by their Ottawa correspondent that I had said " that the Canadian Ministers had been hypnotised by the brilliance of the American offer and had fallen into a trap " is entirely baseless and without foundation in fact. It is unwarranted by anything I have ever said in connection with the Reciprocity Agreement which I have refrained from discussing. Will you kindly make this known in the House ?

Reluctantly, at last, at the Dominion Day banquet in that year, at which H.R.H the Duke of Connaught made his appearance as Governor-General designated to succeed Earl Grey, Lord Strathcona allowed Sir Wilfrid to announce his resignation of the post of High Commissioner which he had held for fifteen years.

" I shall never forget the general blank looks of concern and dismay which greeted that announcement," wrote Major-General Hughes. " I went to him afterwards and told him in the strongest terms he should not, must not, resign. ' But,' he said deprecatingly, ' they want my resignation, do they not? I am now nearly ninety-one. It is fitting that I should make way for a younger man.' I told his lordship that no one in Canada wanted him to resign, that his resignation would be a national calamity, and that in any case he must await the issue of the impending elections." It was then understood that his successor would be Sir Frederick Borden, whose presence was required at that time in Canada.

The Canadian elections duly took place in September. Lord Strathcona took the liveliest interest in the progress of the campaign, especially the appearance of his friend, Sir William Van Horne, in the rôle of political orator, for the ex-President of the Canadian Pacific Railway, in company with many other eminent men of affairs, exerted all his powers of persuasion to prevent the conclusion of a pact

which seemed to him inimical to what he believed to be the best interests of Canada.

On the 21st the issue was decided against the Laurier Government, which had been in power since 1896. A few days later, the Ministers tendered their portfolios to the Governor-General, Earl Grey, who called upon Mr. Robert Laird Borden to form a Ministry.

Scarcely was the result known when the High Commissioner undertook a trip to Canada to salute the new Prime Minister and to place his office at his disposal. Concerning his relations with Lord Strathcona, Sir R. Borden wrote :

When I visited London, while Leader of the Opposition, in 1909, he was most kind and attentive in every way. I was struck at that time with an almost pathetic earnestness in the discharge of even the minor duties of his office. To this I alluded in speaking in the House of Commons upon the occasion of his death.

Returning to London after a garden party and dinner at some distance in the country, I found that Lord Strathcona had called on me in Brown's Hotel and was then engaged with the Hon. Frank Oliver. Having sent word to him that I had returned, I was shortly afterwards informed that he would like to see me ; and going downstairs at midnight I had a long conversation with him, in the course of which I learned that he was engaged in a somewhat acrimonious correspondence with the Lord Chamberlain respecting an invitation for myself and my wife for the approaching State Ball. As you are aware, no person is entitled to be invited to such a Ball unless he or she has first been presented ; and my wife and I had not enjoyed that honour. But Lord Strathcona had taken the ground that in view of my position as Leader of a political party in Canada this pre-requisite should not be insisted upon. It was with the greatest difficulty that I induced him to forego any further effort or correspondence ; and he acceded to my wish only after he had become convinced that my wife and I earnestly desired to go for a proposed holiday in the country.

During my visit as Prime Minister in 1912 he was in evidence on every occasion. He met us at the station upon our arrival in London ; he regularly called upon us at our hotel ; when I left London to visit Paris, I found him (to my great astonishment) waiting for me at the hotel door early in the morning in order to accompany me to the train. On that occasion he reproached me for not having given him formal notice of my departure ; and he seemed to feel

that his failure to attend would have been almost a disgrace. He was so earnest on the subject that when I returned from Paris I gave him by telegraph the formal notice which he desired, and of course I found him again at the station to meet us.

During the autumn before his death he visited Canada, and I discussed with him then, as well as in the summer of 1912, his continuance as High Commissioner. On both occasions I strongly urged him to continue the discharge of his duties, and I offered him additional secretary or secretaries, to be selected by himself, and otherwise I assured him that any arrangements to lighten his labours would be willingly made by the Government. At my most earnest request he continued to discharge the duties of his high office.

On his return to Canada, Mr. Borden received the following :

LONDON,
October 19, 1912.

MY DEAR MR. BORDEN,—We all felt sure that your welcome back to Canada would be of the warmest character throughout, seeing how worthily the Dominion was represented during your stay here.

I can quite understand that the large accumulation of public business during your absence will occupy you very closely for some weeks, and I cannot think of troubling you with more than a few words at the present moment.

To my wife and myself it was a great disappointment that we had not the pleasure of welcoming you in our Scottish home of Glencoe, but we knew how impossible it was for you to put aside even for a day or two the exacting work which occupied you during your whole stay in England ; and we can only hope that we may be more fortunate when next you cross the Atlantic, and that Mrs. Borden and you may then be able to stay with us for a few days.

Believe me, dear Mr. Borden, always sincerely yours,
STRATHCONA.

In the following month he wrote to Mr. Borden with reference to the Commemoration in St. Paul's Cathedral of the one hundredth anniversary of the death of Sir Isaac Brock, the hero of Queenston Heights :

The presence of so many distinguished men on the occasion shows that Canada is now much more in the minds of the people of the United Kingdom than it ever was before, and that, as you so well observe, the great events commemorated are regarded as having a profound influence on the destiny of the Dominion as an integral part of the Empire.

At the Royal Society of Arts, Adelphi, London, on November 15th, 1912, Lord Sanderson, on behalf of the Duke of Connaught, President of the Society, presented the Society's Albert Medal to Lord Strathcona, " for his services in improving the railway communications, developing the resources, and promoting the commerce and industry of Canada and other parts of the British Empire."

Lord Sanderson read a message from the Duke of Connaught, in which His Royal Highness said : " In my present office of Governor-General of Canada I have had special opportunities of fully realising the great services Lord Strathcona has rendered to the Dominion and to the industrial and commercial progress of the British Empire. As an old friend of many years standing, I rejoice that, as President of the Society of Arts, I have been able to add another mark of appreciation of his long and valuable career of usefulness."

No one was more gratified than he at the announcement of the new Prime Minister of a measure of assistance to the Imperial Navy.

On December 7th, 1912, he wrote to Mr. Borden :

> Your announcement of Canada's Naval Emergency Policy has, naturally, been of profound interest.
>
> Mr. Bonar Law, M.P., has given notice that in the House of Commons on Monday, the 9th instant, he will ask " when the Government will afford the House a suitable opportunity of expressing its deep appreciation of the public spirit and patriotism displayed by His Majesty's Dominions overseas in contributing towards the efficiency of Imperial defence."
>
> No doubt a sympathetic answer will be given and an opportunity afforded for the House of Commons to express its appreciation of Canada's splendid gift.

The Borden Navy Bill, however, was defeated; and the " reaction " against Canada—to which allusion was made at the beginning of this chapter—then became even more marked. This condition of affairs is reflected in Lord Strathcona's correspondence; the letter which he sent to

A Reaction against Canada

Mr. Borden early in February, 1913, was written in a far less confident vein than that quoted above :

As you are aware, the attention of the public during recent months has been called rather persistently by the press and by the speeches of prominent men, to the extent to which Canada has been drawing money from this country.

Lord Faber complains of the neglect of gilt-edged securities at home. During last month over forty millions sterling has been found for new companies, against twenty-two millions in January last year, and twenty millions in January, 1911, and only five millions has been placed in this country. Twenty-nine millions have gone to the Colonies and ten millions to foreigners. Nearly the whole of the twenty-nine millions has gone to Canada. I do not want to be an alarmist, because I have a great opinion of Canada, but there should be a moderation in all things. As an illustration of the position, he mentioned a certain bank had to collect a bill of about £500 from a Canadian corporation, and the bill came back unpaid, with a request that it should be presented again when the corporation had obtained the proceeds of a loan from England.

It is a very serious matter. Certain financial papers have suggested that it is good for trade to have money invested abroad, but we ought first to see that we have sufficient money for the home trade without a high bank rate. No doubt new taxes and the fear of war, which I hope will never take place, have driven capital away from this country.

The position of Canada here at present is rather susceptible to adverse rumours and requires careful attention.

Mr. Borden handed this letter to the Minister of Finance, Mr. W. T. White, who replied :

I return herewith Lord Strathcona's letter of the 4th instant, which I have read with much interest. I still hold the view, notwithstanding Lord Faber's opinion, that the money stringency will gradually abate and, while there may be a wholesome check for some months, that in due course British capital will be attracted here in as large or larger volume than in the past.

Nevertheless, proof was almost daily forthcoming that the old days of unquestioned acceptance, when the great Dominion (" The Mayflower of the Colonies ") bounded fresh and blooming into the hearts and stock markets of

Britain, were now over. On February 21st, Lord Strathcona again communicated with Mr. Borden:

An anonymous letter has appeared in the *Economist* dealing unfairly with the question of Canadian crops and wheat production. It puts forward official figures showing decreased acreage under field crops and wheat—asserts land going out of cultivation. The answer to this could be that over a million and a quarter acres fall wheat and hay and clover meadows were winter-killed, and that considerable areas hitherto devoted to wheat were diverted last year to oats, barley and flax.

To disclose these facts in an official communication, controverting the *Economist* and disclosing extent and area of winter-killed might be even more prejudicial to Canada than statement of *Economist*, which, although an important paper, has only limited circulation. The position here is delicate—quantities of undigested municipal and other securities, not alone Canadian, are causing embarrassment to underwriters, and in my view there is danger that an official communication might precipitate an unfortunate controversy. Canadian interests generally are in satisfactory position, the prospects of British emigration indicate that the available transportation facilities will be taxed to utmost during the coming season. Therefore, while recognising the seriousness of attack in *Economist*, after careful consideration, I am inclined to the opinion that we had better refrain from officially controverting it, but I would greatly appreciate expression of your view.

Mr. Borden wrote:

My colleagues and I entirely concur in your view respecting the anonymous letter in the *Economist*. Any official answer or explanation is quite inadvisable.

Lord Strathcona wrote later:

It seems fairly clear that the author of the letter has written with animus, and as the *Economist* is one of the leading financial journals here, it was not a matter which could be passed over unconsidered. I came to the conclusion, however, that the explanation, owing to its nature and the fact that it would be given in an official communication, would be more harmful than the anonymous letter, as it might not only provoke a controversy but would probably be widely quoted by other journals and newspapers, and thus give great prominence to an abnormal condition, the knowledge of which would otherwise be confined to a very limited number. I am glad to learn

that you and your colleagues agree in thinking it best to allow the attack to pass unanswered.

He was equally concerned when a statement appeared in a London daily paper to the effect that the Prime Minister of the Dominion of Canada had come to an understanding with the leaders of the Unionist party in the United Kingdom in regard to the fiscal policy of the latter country. Now, in the political development of the Empire in recent years no principle has become more firmly established than that each Dominion should be entirely untrammelled in the management of its affairs. To Lord Strathcona, therefore, this statement seemed so foreign to what he believed to be the truth that an early opportunity was taken of placing the matter before Mr. Borden.

In reply, he received the following :

PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE, OTTAWA, CANADA,
January 20, 1913.

MY DEAR LORD STRATHCONA,—I beg to acknowledge your letter of January 3rd, respecting the controversy which has arisen in the United Kingdom respecting the policy of food taxes, in the course of which assertion has been made that I had entered into some understanding, arrangement, or agreement with the Leaders of the Unionist Party in respect to that question. I hardly need to assure you that any such assertion is most absolutely and unqualifiedly untrue. Inasmuch as the fiscal policy of the United Kingdom is a question of domestic concern, we most carefully refrained from discussing the subject in public and from any arrangement, understanding, or agreement with either party thereon.—Believe me, yours faithfully,
R. L. BORDEN.

* * * * * *

Twice already had Lord Strathcona offered his resignation : his family and friends ardently wished him to retire. To their solicitations was added that of his physician. Further, he realised that his life work was over, and the truth of the Dutch proverb, that " it is good for a man to end his life ere he die." Accordingly, on February 8th, 1913, he wrote to Mr. Borden :

Deeply sensible am I of the very kind and far too indulgent terms in which, in your confidential letter of the 19th December, you refer to my services as High Commissioner, and ask me to dismiss from my mind the idea of retiring which I submitted to you when you were last in London. You, with much generosity, offer to give me any additional clerical or other assistance I might desire which would make my duties less exacting and less onerous. But the fact really is that since I entered the High Commisioner's Office in 1896 the course of events have been such that Canada has become far better known and is now so thoroughly in the minds of the people that although the volume of work has largely increased, the duties are really much less exacting than they were, and the Staff which has been considerably increased is, as it at present exists, quite capable of coping with the requirements. Let me say that in deference to the earnest insistence of my medical adviser, Sir Thomas Barlow, I tendered my resignation on two occasions to Sir Wilfrid Laurier, when he was Premier, and at my request Sir Wilfrid announced this at the Dominion Day Dinner in London on the 30th June, 1911. The resignation then tendered has never been withdrawn, but when I met you in Ottawa on the 2nd October, 1911, you, as Premier, in the most kind words did me the honour of asking me to retain office, and I gladly consented to discharge the duties until it might be convenient for you to appoint my successor, and so it has stood ever since. Almost a year ago I was very seriously ill, and as Sir Thomas Barlow has been even more insistent than before that I should give up much of the work that I now have in hand, I feel that I ought to act on his advice. I shall, therefore, be greatly indebted to you if you will kindly relieve me from the duties of the office in May next, when I shall have served seventeen years. Permit me at the same time to give expression to my deep sense of gratitude to yourself and the members of your Cabinet, as well as to Sir Wilfrid Laurier and his Colleagues, for the unvarying kindness and consideration and ever ready advice and support you and they have extended to me throughout my long term of service, a service in the interests of Canada which has been to me one of love.

The extraordinary vigour and industry of his old age had become proverbial. He was accustomed to attend at his office in Victoria Street for many hours daily whenever in or near London. "I have breakfast at 9 a.m. and dinner at 9 p.m.," he would say, "and that gives me eleven hours daily for work." He was a constant diner-out, both publicly and privately, but ate and drank always very

sparingly. His watchword was " duty," and he systematically did it as quietly as possible, never losing his temper or " fussing."

He never ceased work, and one of the many stories told of him related to an occasion in 1906 when he had been advised to give himself a rest from his labours.

" You will be gratified to learn," Sir Thomas Shaughnessy told an Anglo-Canadian gathering in London, " that, yielding to the earnest entreaties of Sir Thomas Barlow, Lord Strathcona has decided to relax his energies. He has succumbed to the united pressure of his medical man, his family, and his friends, and has been induced to promise to leave his office at 7.30 each evening instead of 7.45."

His habit of long hours became so well known that, amongst the other Colonial Government offices in Victoria Street, those of Canada were called " The Lighthouse," because a light was to be seen burning in the High Commissioner's room long after other premises were shrouded in darkness.

Work and duty might be considered the two predominating keynotes of his life. He himself said, indeed, that hard work was the best tonic a man could have. " When he has his duty to do he hasn't time to think of himself, nor to allow himself any indulgences which will make him slack and spoil him for good work." And so Lord Strathcona kept the Spartan tenor of his way. To Mr. Borden, on March 22nd, he sent the following :

Am indeed deeply moved by your most kind and far too indulgent message of the 3rd inst. in reply to my telegram of 3rd February. Looking to your great kindness and consideration, I feel that instead of retiring in May next I should meet your wish that I defer relinquishing the duties of High Commissioner until an opportunity offers of a personal interview with you, and to this I very gladly accede. Let me assure you how sincerely I appreciate your own and your colleagues' kind remembrances and warm wishes for my health and strength, and that these are most earnestly reciprocated on my part.—Yours faithfully,

STRATHCONA.

Amongst the last—indeed, as it chanced to be, the very last—of the many projects he had in hand when he was stricken down, was the acquisition of a suitable site for the erection of a building to house the High Commissioner's office and all the Dominion's interests in London under one roof. For upwards of a year the matter had been agitated in various quarters.

Personally, he desired no change. The offices in Victoria Street, sombre and inadequate and wholly unsuggestive of Canada as they were, had become endeared to him by years of association. Yet, if a change were deemed necessary, he wished the new offices to be close to Parliament and in dignified keeping with the position Canada had attained in the Empire. In June, 1912, two emissaries of the Canadian Government arrived in London—Hon. George Foster, M.P., and Sir Edmund Osler, M.P. They found Lord Strathcona in bed, but ready to propose that his first outing after several months seclusion should be devoted, with them, to the search of a site.

On June 15th, he wrote to Mr. Borden :

My recovery from the serious illness which took hold of me in the middle of February last, although what the doctor, Sir Thomas Barlow, considers satisfactory, is very slow, and it is only during the last week or so that I have been able to move about ; but within the last day or two I am feeling stronger and better. I may not, however, be quite well enough to meet you at the steamer on your arrival, but shall arrange that Mr. Griffith will be there with all the letters for you, of which there will doubtless be a good many ; and when you get here I shall be most happy to be of use to you in any and every way I can.

Let me now thank you and your colleagues for your kind and thoughtful good wishes at a time when I was, owing to the severity of my illness, incapable of giving attention to correspondence myself, but pray believe that I am grateful for your and their kind consideration.

In a further letter he said :

To-day we drove to view such sites as, after consideration, were deemed to be eligible. The ones which I think were viewed with most favour were the Westminster Hospital site and Morley's Hotel,

facing Trafalgar Square. As to the latter, we have yet to get full particulars, and the vendors of the hospital site are holding out for what appears to be a rather high price.

I arranged with Mr. Foster that he should cable you, with a view to ascertaining whether the Provinces would join in a general scheme, in the same way that the Australian States are doing, and if this could be arranged it would, no doubt, simplify matters.

But the matter dragged along, and in December nothing had been decided. Meanwhile, Earl Grey had launched his great scheme for a Dominions House in the Strand, in which all the representatives of the nations of the Empire should be gathered together. Nothing attracted Lord Strathcona less. His own views on the matter he took no pains to conceal, and he was accordingly much relieved when Mr. Borden wrote him in December, 1913, that the Ministry "did not consider the time opportune for expending a very large sum of money." To this letter he replied at some length only three days before he died. He composed and signed it on his deathbed. It was the last he wrote, and there is pathos in this evidence of his devotion to Canada's interests, when it is remembered that till then he had done little or nothing in the final arrangements of his own.

January 17, 1914.

DEAR MR. BORDEN,—In view of the circumstances mentioned in your letter I am by no means surprised that you and your colleagues do not consider the time opportune for expending a very large sum of money in connection with the site and buildings for a business home in London for the Dominion of Canada. While less than twenty years ago there was little belief in the future of Canada by men of affairs in the United Kingdom or by the peoples of the world generally, the position is now entirely changed. To-day the Dominion occupies a foremost place in the thoughts of all people, and requires no adventitious advertising of a spectacular character to draw attention to her merits and to the opportunities offered to those from other countries who are capable and determined to make a place in the world in which they can settle down and become prosperous.

An enormously expensive edifice near the Strand on the plan put before me by Lord Grey, with an elevation overtopping not only the Commonwealth and other buildings in the immediate vicinity,

but the dome of the great Cathedral St. Paul's, I could not possibly regard as other than an unpardonable expenditure, and in my mind such a vast building, with a dominating pinnacle erected as a striking advertisement, would provoke ridicule rather than bring advantage to our great country and its people. I am more convinced every day that it is not in the grand architectural effect of the offices of the Dominion in London that the requirements of the situation are to be found, but in the work that is actually done within them in the interests of the Canadian people.

At the same time a Syndicate or Company registered as The Exchange of International and Colonial Commerce, Limited, has formally asked me to place before you certain statements in connection with the Aldwych site and their negotiations with Lord Grey, which they consider should be brought to your knowledge, and I enclose the statutory declaration they have forwarded for this purpose.—Believe me to be, dear Mr. Borden, with kindest regards, yours sincerely,

STRATHCONA.

For the greater part of his 93rd birthday Lord Strathcona sat at his desk in London working as usual, seeming rather surprised that the numerous journalists who crowded his office should take any notice of the fact that he was within seven years of attaining his century of life.

His last visit to Glencoe was in September, when he made a prolonged stay. He left Glencoe on October 4th, accompanied by Lady Strathcona. Few then thought that neither of them would ever see again their Highland estate with its romantic surroundings which they cherished so much. Yet the year was not to pass without Lord Strathcona suffering a severe blow, from which he never recovered. The whole Empire, which regarded him with affection and veneration as a type of what was worthiest within it, learnt with regret of the breaking of the tender tie which bound him to his beloved wife. Lady Strathcona had of late been frail, much subject to colds, and much confined to the house. On sunny days she would take short walks in Grosvenor Square, opposite her London home, accompanied by a companion and her faithful little Yorkshire terrier. On Friday, November 7th, she suffered from what at first seemed a usual cold, but it

rapidly developed into influenza and pneumonia, and she died on the evening of the 12th in her 89th year. Thus terminated a union lasting through six decades.

"When," a friend wrote at her death, "Lady Strathcona was away from London, Lord Strathcona would allow nothing to stand in the way of his daily message to her. During her last visit to Glencoe, Lord Strathcona was seen, in seeming peril, dodging in and out of the crowded traffic of Victoria Street, opposite the High Commissioner's office. A Canadian friend, with the kindliest intentions, offered to escort his lordship to his destination. His offer was declined. Hastening into the High Commissioner's office, this Canadian begged that someone might be sent to take the High Commissioner's message for him. He did not know that the nonagenarian High Commissioner went out every night at that hour to the telegraph office across the way. He would entrust a thousand messages to messengers, but this one message no one was allowed to handle but himself. It went to Lady Strathcona at Glencoe.

"She knew what work was and loved to be busy. When you called you might expect to find her knitting some little woollen presents for her grandchildren or for near friends. Even her husband and daughter knew nothing of many gifts of money and self-knitted goods with which she relieved poverty and distress.

"Her last notable exertion was her hurried visit to Canada in the previous August. When, in 1912, Lord Strathcona made his penultimate trip to New York and Montreal, she declared that he should never go again without her. She was, she said, quite as well able to go as he, and nothing could prevent her keeping her word, certainly not the reminder that she had always been a bad sailor, sometimes going into her state cabin on the first day of the voyage, only to leave it when the steamer touched American soil. A visitor referred to this trip when talking to Lady Strathcona a little while ago, and her reply was, 'Yes, I am

very glad I went. I long desired to see Canada again. It is wonderful.' "

The memory of Lady Strathcona which many Canadians cherish is at a sunny summer garden party on Dominion Day in the beautiful gardens of Knebworth Park, where she made welcome to her friends and showed her unfeigned delight in the shrill music of the Scottish pipers. It was a call back to early happy days.

Although a woman of retiring and altogether unostentatious nature, Lady Strathcona throughout her life splendidly seconded her husband in his innumerable acts and schemes for the benefit of the people of Canada and of mankind at large. With her daughter, the Hon. Mrs. Howard, Lady Strathcona gave $100,000 to McGill University for the erection of a new wing to the medical building. To Queen Alexandra's fund for the relief of the unemployed of Great Britain, she gave $32,500, and from time to time she also gave largely in many directions.

* * * * * *

After his wife's death the catarrhal malady, which had long troubled him, increased. Lord Strathcona became confined to his room, and on January 17th, 1914, was suffering from great prostration, heart failure threatening. His condition continued very grave, with no signs of improvement, and it was stated on the evening of Monday (the 19th) that he was sinking. He never rallied, and passed away very peacefully at five minutes to two on the morning of January 21st in the presence of the immediate members of his family, including Dr. Howard, his son-in-law, and Sir Thomas Barlow.

He made a brave fight for life, full of the desire to conquer his illness. Even on the Saturday preceding his death, when suffering great weakness, when, indeed, his life was despaired of, he summoned all his lingering strength to request that official letters and documents should be sent to his house in Grosvenor Square from the High Commis-

sioner's office that they might duly receive his official signature.

The news of his death was at an early hour communicated to the King, the Duke of Connaught, Governor-General of Canada, and the Canadian Government, from whom messages of sympathy and regret at the loss Canada had sustained were duly received.

The Duke of Argyll telegraphed from Kensington Palace :

"Our greatest, yet with least pretence," as Tennyson said of Wellington.

ARGYLL.

In Canada the grief at his death was widespread and profound. Flags were flown at half-mast on the Bank of Montreal, the Windsor Station, the Grand Trunk Railway offices, Canadian and Dominion Express Companies' buildings, and many of the principal business houses in the commercial capital of the Dominion, of which he was a citizen.

In the Canadian Parliament the Prime Minister moved the adjournment of the House. His words deserve to be quoted :

It is fitting I am sure, and all members of both sides in this House will agree, that we should pay a tribute to the memory of the great Canadian who passed away yesterday.

I speak of Lord Strathcona as a Canadian because, although born across the sea, his lifework was almost altogether carried on in this country, to the service of which he consecrated many years of his life.

He had a notable career, a career marked, especially in the earlier years of his life, by conditions and difficulties more arduous than those which most men are called upon to meet.

When one looks back upon the great span of years over which his lifetime stretched, one is tempted to recall all that has transpired in His Majesty's Dominion on this side of the Atlantic since Lord Strathcona came to this country at the age of eighteen.

At that time there was much political unrest in Canada, carried in some parts of the country even to the extent of rebellion. At that time we had not achieved the right of self-government or many of those constitutional liberties which have been developed, and have

come into force from time to time. Nearly half the period of Lord Strathcona's allotted existence had passed when this Confederation was formed, and from 1838, when he first came to Canada, during the period of his life which succeeded, he saw what one might call a complete transformation of the northern half of this Continent. He had been a prominent figure in the public life of this country before he undertook, at the age of 76, to discharge the duties of the high office of High Commissioner of Canada.

My right hon. friend knows, perhaps better than I do, the devotion which Lord Strathcona gave to those duties. I have known many men in my own lifetime who have been inspired by a high sense of duty, but I do not know of any man in my acquaintance and knowledge who has been inspired by a higher conception of duty than was Lord Strathcona. As the weight of years pressed upon him, it was almost pathetic to see the devotion with which he insisted upon performing even the minor duties of his position.

In all the time I have known him (and that was in the later years of his life) I was struck with the fact that time did not seem to have dimmed the freshness of his spirit, the vigour of his will, or his strength of purpose.

The duties of the office which he discharged were always important and sometimes delicate, and it is satisfactory to us to remember that no man more than he had a higher pride in this country, in all that it has achieved, in all that it might achieve in the future, and no man more than he had a deeper interest in all that concerned the honour, dignity, and interests of Canada, nor was more concerned to do his duty.

I think that the example of his life may well be an inspiration to us Canadians. . . .

Besides that, his many benefactions to great charitable purposes are known to all men, so that I do not need to do more than allude to them to-day. I consider that it would be a fitting tribute of respect of his memory that this House should stand adjourned till to-morrow, and I shall move, seconded by Sir Wilfrid Laurier, that the House do stand adjourned.

It was believed at first that Lord Strathcona's mortal remains would find fitting sepulchre in Westminster Abbey, and, indeed, the Dean and Chapter offered this, the greatest honour that can be given to Britain's noblest dead. But he had expressed on his deathbed a wish to sleep his eternal sleep beside his wife in the cemetery at Highgate, and this

wish was respected by his family. It was, however, at the Abbey that the funeral service was performed.

Before the arrival of the body at the Abbey, Sir Frederick Bridge, who was at the organ, played an ancient and a modern lament for the dead. The first was the sonorous music composed by Purcell for the funeral of Queen Mary in 1694, and the other was Chopin's well-known Funeral March. The great bell of the Abbey was tolling as the funeral procession drove into Dean's Yard. At the door of the west cloisters the body was received by the Dean of Westminster, the clergy and choristers, and the pall-bearers. The coffin was borne into the church hidden from view beneath the heavy folds of the Abbey pall, of deep purple velvet with an edging of silver and gold lace, and thickly strewn with lilies of the valley and fern. The ten pall-bearers, selected on account of their special connection with Canada or personal relationship with Lord Strathcona, were as follows: Lord Aberdeen, Lord Lansdowne, Lord Lichfield, Very Rev. George Adam Smith (Principal of Aberdeen University), Mr. W. L. Griffith (Secretary of the Canadian High Commissioner's office), the Duke of Argyll, the Lord Mayor, Mr. Harcourt (Colonial Secretary), Sir William Osler (Regius Professor of Medicine, Oxford), Sir Thomas Skinner (Deputy-Governor of the Hudson's Bay Company).

The chief mourners included the Hon. Mrs. Jared Bliss Howard (the present Baroness Strathcona), Mr. Howard and their sons and daughters, Miss Smith (niece), Mrs. Grant (niece), and the Misses Grant, Lieutenant Kitson, R.N., and Mr. A. May (private secretary), and Mr. James Garson (the family solicitor).

One wreath was carried behind the coffin. Composed of lilies of various kinds and heliotrope orchids, it was sent by Queen Alexandra, and attached to it was a card bearing the words, in her Majesty's handwriting: "In sorrowful memory of one of the Empire's kindest of men and the greatest of benefactors, from ALEXANDRA."

After the opening sentences of the burial service had been read, the procession passed up the nave to the singing of "O God of Bethel," his favourite hymn, recited by him shortly before he died. The coffin was then placed on a bier beneath the lantern, and around it six candles dimly burned.

The Dean of Westminster (Bishop Ryle) and the Precentor of the Abbey (the Rev. L. H. Nixon) officiated, and when the funeral procession left the Abbey the coffin, covered with beautiful wreaths, was placed in a glass-framed motor-hearse and conveyed to Highgate Cemetery. The vault in which Lady Strathcona was buried lies at the northern end of the burial ground, a pleasantly situated corner almost within the shadow of the trees of Waterlow Park. Here a large number of people gathered behind the barrier of ropes which marked off the space round the graveside.

The brief committal service was marked by the same simplicity as the proceedings in the Abbey. The chief mourners stood around the grave, while those who had driven from the Abbey, including the Duke of Argyll and Lord Aberdeen, were grouped behind them. The committal portion of the Church of England service was read by the Rev. Archibald Fleming, of St. Columba's (Church of Scotland), Pont Street, with the addition of special prayers taken from the Church of Scotland order. The coffin was finally lowered into the grave and placed beside the body of Lady Strathcona, with the two wreaths sent by members of the family upon it.

It was not a State nor yet a public funeral. With all his greatness the late High Commissioner of Canada was a simple and homely man; and it was the desire of his relatives that his burial should be in keeping with his character, as private and devoid of show as possible.

CHAPTER XXVII

PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS

IT is rare in history for the life of a single individual to coincide at so many points with the life of a nation as does Lord Strathcona's with that of Canada. The date of his birth takes us back to within a few months of the reign of that monarch to whom New France was surrendered, and for whose sake the United Empire loyalists later migrated. He came to Canada in the very first year of Queen Victoria's accession and at a critical moment in history. The mission of Lord Durham marks a new epoch in that history, and the subject of these pages was himself an eye-witness of the events which the famous pro-consul reported. His activities were intimately connected first with the Far East and then with the Far West. He began his political career just after the Dominion of Canada was born. He saw the birth of Manitoba and was her first representative. He was concerned in the genesis of some of Canada's greatest institutions. He saw the beginning of her first period of great prosperity, to which his own efforts had so largely contributed, and he died almost on the eve of a fresh era when her people, also largely by reason of his teaching and his example, sanctified for ever by thousands of lives and millions of money the bond which binds them to the Empire of which they form a part.

At the public meeting of the citizens of Montreal in 1900 which resulted in the erection of the Strathcona monument in Dominion Square, he told his hearers that he could then look back on more than 60 years of work in Canada. Yet, when he uttered those words, he had already for some time past held his high office as the nation's representative in

London, and after that he performed further long, arduous labour which has given him Imperial renown and placed all Canada eternally in his debt.

"He was," in Mr. Austen Chamberlain's words, "a splendid illustration of the opportunities which the British Empire affords to its sons, and of the use the best of them can make of those opportunities. With no advantages of birth or fortune, he made himself one of the great outstanding figures of the Empire. He made a great fortune, but, what was more, he used it nobly, not for himself, but for his country and his Empire. He did more than make a fortune. He helped to make a great nation, the greatest of our sister nations over the seas, and to encourage in that nation a larger patriotism which, abating not one jot of its own local spirit, can yet impress the Empire as a whole, can think Imperial and place Imperial interests before any local interests, however important at the moment they may seem. Such a life is an example to us all. And we must resolve that the great lesson which Lord Strathcona's life taught shall be learned by us all, and that each, according to his means and in his own capacity, will be a true and faithful servant, as Lord Strathcona was, of the country which bred him and the Empire of which he is a citizen."

It came about towards the end that his weight of years, his venerable aspect and his high Imperial reputation, his vast wealth as well as his personal rank and representative capacity, made him a central figure in most gatherings at the seat of the Empire. He was, wherever he went, always an honoured guest, taking his place with the great by birth, or place, or intellect, or achievement. His part was always to serve some purpose, to represent some great interest, and it was remarked that, as High Commissioner in London, he never failed to appear when he deemed that by so doing he could at the same time further Canada's interests.

Are men who have been so fortunate as Lord Strathcona

really entitled to all the vast wealth which has passed into their hands ?

To this question Sir William Peterson supplies an answer :

" It is well for the world when great wealth is in the hands of those who have anything like the sense of responsibility that animated him, and anything like the same desire to serve the public interest.

" Lord Strathcona carved out his career in the heroic days of Canadian history—when individual pioneers were privileged to write their names in large characters across the whole breadth of the continent. And, after all, he was no mere sordid seeker after gain, nor did his material prosperity ever blunt the edge of his moral and social ideals and aspirations. In a word, his soul was not submerged, as is sometimes unfortunately the case, by the gathering tide of worldly success. Duty was his guiding star—duty and conscience. We ought to be glad, too—ought we not ? —in our day and generation, that Canada can boast of him as a man of unspotted integrity. His word was as good as his bond. But he carefully weighed nearly every word he uttered, and most certainly every word he ever wrote. None could apply the pruning knife more remorselessly than he to the language of any document for which he was expected to make himself in any way responsible. He was above everything accurate even in the use of words. I fancy he had done most of his reading in early life ; when in the lone silence of the Labrador he acquired that stock of ideas and that power of expression which stood him in such good stead when he had to address himself, comparatively late in life, to the difficult art of public speaking. And he could appreciate a telling phrase, or the pointed turn of a sentence.

" I remember he once asked me to supply him with a Latin motto for his coat of arms, which had hitherto contained the one English word ' Perseverance.' When I

inquired what idea he would like to have expressed, he half whispered, 'In the van.' I gave him *agmina ducens*, and there it stands to-day. And yet, for all his eagerness to be 'in the van,' one can never think of him as anything but essentially modest and unassertive. You all know what his bearing was on the various occasions on which he was seen in our midst—inwardly glad, no doubt, to receive the homage of our love and praise, but genuinely anxious at the same time that no one should be put to any inconvenience because of him.

"And all the qualities of which he gave evidence in public were familiar to those who knew him in his home. The death of his wife, but ten short weeks before his own, was naturally the greatest sorrow of his whole life. One who saw much of him at the time has told me how it seemed to shake his soul to its depths, and thereafter he was as a stricken man. The friends who met the aged pair on the occasion of their last visit to Montreal will recall some of the instances of the kindly humour that always characterised their intercourse with each other; and it is a satisfaction to remember, now they are both gone, that through their loving and devoted daughter their lineage is continued in the third generation.

"Lord Strathcona lived a strenuous and a useful life. I have shown how it was characterised by courage and high resolve in critical and anxious times. As someone said recently, he always showed that he could rise to the height of great occasions. But alongside of that should be placed the continuous response of constant application for public and private charity, to which his resources were fortunately adequate—a charity that was never exercised, be it remembered, in mechanical fashion, but always with some personal touch of kindly courtesy and consideration. Even in his latest days he was thinking of what he could do for others: and it ought to be mentioned here that, evidently remembering of his own accord a certain payment which he was

in the habit of making to the Royal Victoria College about the time of the New Year, he cabled the sum of forty-five thousand dollars practically on the very day before he died. He was given to hospitality; and his Montreal home was long a recognised place of meeting for many who, under the divided conditions of our civil life, seldom meet anywhere else. He was full of the conviction that in our province French and English must perforce agree to live together, for the very good reason that here neither of the two races can live without the other.

"While his personal motto was always 'In the van,' he never failed to give full credit to others in the Canadian Pacific Railway and other great enterprises with which he was identified. While non-partisan, he heartily sympathised with Mr. Chamberlain's idea that our Empire should become more conscious of itself. The late Chancellor's contribution to education constituted no mere stereotyped or conventional form of benevolence. In scientific, medical, and higher education for women he was a pioneer with a marked power of initiative which had been felt all over Canada. He was no sordid seeker after gain, nor did material prosperity ever blunt the edge of his moral and social ideals and aspirations. In a word, his soul was not submerged by the gathering tide of worldly success. A man of unspotted integrity throughout his long career, he measured up to Aristotle's definition of 'high-mindedness.'"

No reader of the *Ethics,* bearing Lord Strathcona in mind, can fail to be struck by the remarkable appropriateness of many passages in those two chapters in the fourth book, in which the Greek philosopher speaks of "high-mindedness" and "munificence." Munificence, as the name implies, differs from liberality in the largeness of the sums with which it deals. Its general characteristic is magnitude, but this must be in relation to three things: the person who gives, the circumstances of the gift, and its

object. Hence every munificent man is liberal, but not every liberal man is munificent. There is a sort of scientific skill implied in munificence. This is needed to decide under what various circumstances, as they actually occur (for action is the only real test of disposition in this as in other virtues), great expenditure is befitting and appropriate. The occasion must be worthy of the expenditure, and the expenditure of the occasion.

As to the occasions which are fitting for the display of munificence, Aristotle notices first, the service of religion, and next, great public or patriotic services. In all these cases, however, regard must be had to the social position and to the means of the doer, as well as the work done. It would be out of place for a man of small or moderate means to aspire to be munificent. It is a virtue reserved for those of great wealth, inherited or acquired, good birth, and high station.

The application is not less felicitous when he describes the high-minded man. Such an one, we are told, will not court danger, but if it be great and worthy of him, he will face it without regard to his life, which he does not think worth preserving at the cost of honour. He loves to conquer and is ashamed to receive benefits, and he hastens to requite them with increase. He is reluctant to ask a favour, though ready to confer one. With great men he carries his head high; while with ordinary men he is unaffected. He is no gossip; he is a man of few words, sparing alike in his praise and in his reproaches. His gait, his voice and his manner of speech will be grave, dignified and deliberate.

Such is the high-minded man. Such was Lord Strathcona.

"I knew him," writes Miss Hurlbatt, "only as a very old man, always with a certain detachment of manner, as if he had already passed some boundaries of time and space beyond his fellows, and while occupied and keenly interested

and ceaselessly concerned with work and duty and service, really alone with himself.

"Perhaps he was always like this—utterly master of himself and of his fate. The early years of discipline and loneliness may have worked this in him. Certain it is that whatever he had suffered of 'fret and dark and thorn and chill,' had with him 'banked in the current of the will' to uses, arts and charities."

The Warden of Victoria College has vividly described her first impression of him:

"I found him in his office in Victoria Street, as he has been seen by so many who came to him from far and near, seated by his desk in a very bare and unpretentious room, in an attitude with which I was to become familiar, and which has been characteristically recorded for us by Mr. Robert Harris in the portrait that hangs in our Hall, one hand holding his chair, the other resting on his knee—an attitude that with many people would suggest relaxation and would be an attitude of repose—with him, as you will have noticed, it was compatible with alertness and a keen concentration upon any affair at the moment in hand. This attitude, apart from his white hairs and venerable expression, was the only thing which suggested age—it was as if he gave his body rest that his mind should be more free and have the use of all his force. . . . His voice was a revelation of his personality; in an almost startling way it betrayed in an instant the man. It was resonant, far-reaching, almost hard in the way every word and every inflection was sent out to reach its purpose, every word conveying a sense of power behind it. His voice was even and exact—and it was so when it was kindest and most gentle, and even when other signs betrayed that he spoke with a sense of amusement."

All those who were brought into close touch with him in his later years bear witness to the same traits of character which his early fur-trading associates had noted.

"His insistence," writes Dr. Wilfrid Grenfell, the famous Labrador missionary, "on the greatness of little things never failed to impress those who came in contact with him, and this was combined with his distrust of conventions and emphasis on the reliability of plain common sense. One soon learnt to realise how he came to be possessed of that secret of greatness and faculty of arriving quickly at correct conclusions.

"As a tiny illustration of this, once at breakfast the lamp under the hot water kettle had gone out. The butler, apologising, said 'he had forgotten to put any spirits into it.' Without the slightest display of anger, but like a man insisting on some great universal principle, our host said quietly: 'Remember, James, you have only certain duties to perform. This is one. Never, under any circumstances, let such an omission occur again.'

"Whatever that dignified official got out of it, I learned a truth of no small value. In my own craft of surgery, the omission of some apparently trifling detail—and it is equally true of ordinary business—might at any time cause irreparable disaster. One of the chief reasons why the Turks, though a virile race of physical fighters, are unable to hold their own, is because they make 'Fate' or 'Kismet' responsible for their failures and neglect.

"About twenty years ago we arrived in Montreal just before Christmas Day, and were very anxious to get an early appointment with Lord Strathcona. He himself was overwhelmed with engagements, and it seemed impossible for him to be able to give the time we sought, and it looked as though we should have to go away without seeing him. It was entirely characteristic of his courtesy, however, that he should have replied to our request that if we would come on Christmas Day he would be able to give us the time we desired, but when we noticed that he had appointed Hudson's Bay House for the rendezvous on that day, we were a little surprised. When we found it, it was away

down town, and a purely business place, and we knew that of course all the employees would be away keeping the holiday. I still remember vividly the deserted streets, so impressive in the big, busy centre: the silence and the entire absence even on the streets of any living thing, and at last the great, towering portals of the world-famous Company's offices. I climbed the steps with no little trepidation, and the bell startled me when its echoes rang out as if in some long deserted haunt of men. Finally, the great door swung open, and there stood, quite alone, the old gentleman, already white-haired, positively apologising for keeping me waiting.

" ' There's no one in the house,' he began, ' so I have to answer the door myself.' Our amazement at seeing him there at all on that day was so badly disguised that he went on to explain that the famous physician, Sir Andrew Clark, had more than once warned him that to stop work would be fatal to him, and that he realised it was true.

" When we went in he was opening letters from an almost endless pile. ' These are all requests for help,' he went on. ' I like to deal with them personally when I can get time, but I have calculated that if I granted them all, I shouldn't have a single cent left.'

" On one occasion he was asking me about old Labrador acquaintances, and it was then fifty years since he had left the coast; it might have been expected that with all his multiplicity of interests he would long before have forgotten the individual. He happened to ask after a certain woman who had been his servant so many years before. I told him that she had long ago passed away, but that her daughter, who was married and had a very large family, had often spoken of her mother's connection with him. He asked how she was faring with so many children, but appeared to take very little notice when I told him that the family were having hard times. However, the next time I visited that part of Labrador I heard that he had sent a special

Labrador order of pork, flour, molasses, butter, and many outfits of clothing for herself and the children. The method of accomplishing this was to us just another demonstration of his greatness. To this day the woman is wondering 'where on earth that winter's diet and all that clothing could have come from.'

"My last interview with him was just before his death. He had come to the office of the Company in London for the discussion of a new policy. While we lunched he sat and talked. There was hardly a line on his face, and every faculty was on the alert. He had come down, in spite of the doctor's orders not to leave the house, to hear what I had to say about Labrador. One of his first inquiries was after the little hospital steamer which for so many years has borne his name on the coast. He was much concerned to hear that her boilers had blown out, and that she was laid up owing to the lack of necessary funds to replace them. It seems almost superfluous to say that he at once ordered them to be replaced at his expense, so as to make the ship as efficient as possible, and the day after I received a letter to confirm his wishes.

"A gap of two years had elapsed since I had last seen Lord Strathcona, and even then he was ninety years of age, and one might have supposed that so long after the allotted span of three score years and ten, a man whose life had been spent under such strenuous circumstances must be verifying the words of the Psalmist and finding his days 'but labour and sorrow.' Not so, however, with this man. So far as his keen interest in life was concerned, his natural force seemed in no way abated. He still found his greatest pleasure in a full day's work, and when the day itself had gone, the same sufficient satisfaction in the company of the long-time partner of his life—and of their family.

"This time, however, a blind man could realise a vast difference in his attitude towards the world. The same interest, the same courage, but no longer the same man.

He seemed to me like one of the great solitary rocks of our barren coast, which, from time immemorial, far out in the wide ocean, during the season of open water, has raised its head above the gigantic rollers of the Atlantic, and in winter towered over the resistless grinding of the Atlantic field-ice.

" Alone left of his generation, Lord Strathcona seemed now to me to loom up as just such another wonder. The discussion on the business which had brought us together had come to an end. We were thinking of saying good-bye when suddenly he leaned over towards me and said : ' You will let me know about the boilers for the hospital ship ? See that they are done as well as they can be, and come and see me before you go back to Labrador.' The word seemed involuntarily to have carried his thought back to the long ago scenes of that country where first he had met the wife whom he had loved so truly. It seemed to me that his white head bent a little lower as he added : ' Doctor, a terrible blow has come to me since you were here last—terrible—terrible,' he repeated.

" The next reference which we saw to our old friend was the public dispatch in the newspaper telling of his death, and that he was to find a last resting-place in the Abbey, the Valhalla of the nation's mighty dead. But later came the news that his wishes were to be respected, and that the personal honour, so much coveted by many, found no echo in this great man's life. He had chosen to sleep his last long sleep by the side of her he loved so well.

" So even in death he has left the nation a better legacy than silver and gold, in reminding us again of the greatest of all secrets of the greatest of all lives—the possession, not of money, but of the spirit of simple love."

In religious matters Lord Strathcona was truly catholic; and in his benefactions favoured Roman, Anglican, Methodist, Baptist, and Presbyterian alike.

" I wish," declared Dr. Archibald Fleming, of the Lon-

don Presbyterian Church of St. Columba, speaking at the time of Lord Strathcona's death, "to speak of him as I knew him—a humble Christian and a deeply religious man. He was a loyal and generous son of the Church of Scotland; and almost with his last breath he told me—as he had often done before—how deep was his affection for her simple worship, and how he valued her ordinances most of all.

"But in saying this he added—and, speaking as one who was delivering a testimony, he bade me repeat it to others—that in his long life he had learned a great toleration, and had come to realise that God reveals Himself to His faithful people by the lips of all the Churches; for it had been his experience that he could receive benefit from them all; so that to him denominational distinctions, and even the distinction between Protestant and Roman, almost ceased to exist in view of the great elemental truths which all, according to their ability, strove to represent; the 'Good and Great Creator' could and would reveal himself somehow to us through them all. Such was the wide sweep of this great man's spiritual vision, and such the large charity of his great heart." In other words, his religion was vital rather than technical.

"In private life," wrote a visitor some years ago, "Lord Strathcona is a most engaging host. He does not greatly care for personal talk. He is too self-contained and too watchful to be drawn out. Control and a sort of lofty prudence are expressed by his bearing and by the intrepid look in his eyes. He carries with him the atmosphere that surrounds all men who have dwelt long in solitude. His favourite attitude when conversing is a strong folding of the arms and a downward, pondering look. His hair is now snow-white, his skin is fresh, and about him there is a pleasant vigour that is wonderful for his eighty years. His talk is bright, and he is equally at home in American, Canadian or English politics. There is not a financial

movement of importance anywhere in the world that he is uninformed upon, and his gallery of acquaintances and friends is of amazing extent and variety, from the clerk at some outlandish post of the Hudson's Bay Company to the King of England."

"He was," testified Sir Thomas Shaughnessy, " the soul of hospitality, loved to have people about him as his guests, spared no effort or expense to contribute to their comfort and pleasure, and in his dealings with his fellowmen he was a model of courteous consideration."

The last forty years of his life were so entirely given up to affairs that he had little or no time for the reading of books. But he was a close and discerning reader of the newspapers. He showed a considerable familiarity with the standard authors whose works he had studied in his youth. Amongst the novelists, after Scott, he had a relish for Dickens, whom besides he much esteemed as a man. On the approach of the centenary of Dickens's birth, he was much moved when he heard that certain descendants of the great novelist were in necessitous circumstances, owing to the nature of the laws affecting literary property. " Of course," he said, " we must help them. That is surely the best way to celebrate the Dickens centenary."

Not only did he become one of the first subscribers to the fund (which exceeded £10,000), but later took charge of the investments in Canada at a higher guaranteed rate of interest than could be obtained in England.

It cannot be said that Lord Lytton had been one of his favourite authors (in his younger days he admitted having read *The Last Days of Pompeii*); he rather knew him as statesman, and especially as Colonial Secretary; but when he leased Knebworth, the ancestral seat of the Lyttons, the association of the famous author and his gifted son had a genuine interest for him. But the old-world beauty of Knebworth was its greatest charm. He and Lady Strathcona used to receive their guests in the great

hall, with its groined roof and stained-glass windows, whence the visitors passed out into the gardens beyond, where a band usually discoursed sweet music. During the intervals a couple of pipers of the Scots Guards marched up and down the paths playing the bagpipes. Tea was served in a large marquee and at small tables dotted on the incomparable lawn. The valuable pictures and objects of art in the state rooms on the first floor of the house he took pleasure in showing, as also Queen Elizabeth's chair in a gallery overlooking the hall. But he loved most to walk about in the gardens and converse with his friends.

To Miss Hurlbatt I am indebted for a further glimpse into his domestic life and a touching incident.

He had invited to a garden-party at Silver Heights, his old home, all the members of the British Association and every man and woman then in Winnipeg, whom he had known in the old days of his residence there, or their children and their grandchildren.

"Picture the scene on Silver Heights. A low hilltop overlooking the city—the house had been burnt down, the garden had become a wilderness, the lawns and pathways had literally to be mown like a hayfield, and sprouting wood to be cut away to clear something like two rough fields and one wide, grassy, stump-covered walk. Two great tents were pitched for refreshments. The old man with his grandchildren stood under the shelter of some small, shrub-like trees, upon what had once been a winding pathway.

"It was cold, and it was raining—I remember we were many of us in cloaks and rubbers, for the ground was wringing wet. The tents were full to overflowing, but he had discharged the duty of real hospitality—he had received his friends on his own territory—and the sight of his familiar figure in its summer grey frockcoat and light top-hat, supported by the happy-looking boy and girl, and surrounded by young and old, rich and poor, tired working-men carrying their babies, surprised and eager wives and mothers with

toddling little boys and girls, old men with wrinkled faces and hard-worn bodies and clothes that spoke of struggle, not of affluence, and he so evidently happy and eager in his talk, recognising faces of the old and names and stories of the young—that was indeed a sight to be treasured in the memory all one's days."

Many years ago he invited a large and distinguished party of tourists, including two Continental princes, to dine and pass the night at Silver Heights on their way through to the West. Accommodation being scanty, it was necessary to add a series of bedrooms to the house and otherwise to improvise domestic arrangements. The notice was brief: a force of workmen was engaged, materials were hastily shipped from St. Paul's, but although the work was pressed forward at high speed, the night of the party arrived and the bedrooms were not quite finished.

The guests were dined at the club at Winnipeg, a large staff of waiters having been put into a strange livery for the occasion, and dinner was protracted until a late hour in order to give the carpenters and furnishers time to put on the finishing touches to Silver Heights. In fact, it was after midnight when a welcome telephone message reached Sir Donald to say that his guests could start for the house.

By that time several were overcome with sleep, and perhaps an excess of hospitality! There was no doubt whatever as to the condition of the carriage drivers: they were intoxicated to a man. However, all were finally got to Sir Donald's roof, and none surveying their sumptuous sleeping-quarters could have had the slightest suspicion that the whole had risen like a mushroom in the course of a few hours. Unhappily, the host having seen the company to bed, found that he had reckoned without himself: there was neither bedroom nor bed for his repose. Weary with his efforts in which anxiety had played no small part, he flung himself into a chair and slept till morning.

Sir Sanford Fleming relates that once, being in the train with a fishing-party, he invited all to dine and sojourn with him for the night at his fishing-lodge at Matapedia, the same which had formerly belonged to the Marquess of Lorne and the Princess Louise.

"Next morning, wishing to be abroad early to join a friend, I dressed hastily and descended the stairs in the half-light. On the bottom stair my foot touched a figure, which sprang up, and I recognised my host. Though he smiled genially and bade me good-morning and was full of solicitude, I knew he had been asleep all night on that bottom stair, having given up his bedroom either to me or to some other of the party."

"Reflecting," continued Sir Sanford, "upon my long acquaintance of over forty years with Lord Strathcona, and remembering so many traits of his quiet benevolence, I think one may say of him that he was a man whose greatest happiness was in making others happy."

Lord Strathcona was, as has been aptly said, "studiously careless" about his health. His chief affliction was colds, and it is a wonder that these did not, through his imprudences, lead to serious illness.

On one occasion, according to Mr. Charles R. Hosmer, "Lord Strathcona was declared to be very ill, and threatened with pneumonia. His private car at the time was ordered in readiness for Florida. He learned suddenly that his presence might be useful in Winnipeg, where the Manitoba school question had come to the front. Without saying a word to his doctor or anybody, he ordered his car to be attached to the Winnipeg train, and off he went. Lady Strathcona was greatly alarmed, and came to my office next morning. I was then general manager of the C.P.R. Telegraph. We found out that he was as far as the north side of Lake Superior at the time, and it was thirty degrees below zero there. The night after he arrived in Winnipeg he gave a banquet to the Bishop of St. Boniface. Later,

when he returned, I spoke to him of how deeply concerned, not to say alarmed, Lady Strathcona had been. He smiled and said: 'Yes, I remember that cold morning; I had to break the ice in the pitcher when I got up.'"

Yet of the seasons he loved winter best. He liked to look out upon a world bathed in sunshine—a world in which the trees sparkled with frost, and the air exhilarated like wine. It was then he would oftenest exclaim: "What a beautiful day! What glorious weather!" Once he said to a guest, Mr. William Garson:

"It has been said that power, that empire came from the north. Northern people have always stood for courage and unconquerability. They have the muscle, the wholesomeness of life, the strength of will.

"In Canada we have, upon the whole, the best climate in the world. Our winters may be cold, but think of the dry and exhilarating atmosphere which makes for health and every sort of alertness. Those who are accustomed to the north might taste a little experience of the south, and the south might drop in upon the north once in a while, doubtless with mutual advantage."

His London house was at first No. 53 Cadogan Square, and afterwards No. 28 Grosvenor Square. But he long considered his real home as at Montreal. His Montreal establishment always continued as if its owner was in residence. There was that collection of pictures containing examples of Raphael, Titian, Turner, Reynolds, Gainsborough, Romney, Millais, Rosa Bonheur, Constable, Constant, Alma-Tadema, and other artists. One work of art which he was fond of showing was unique in its way. It was a carving done by Esquimaux of the remoter north, and presented by them to Lady Strathcona. It shows a portion of an Esquimaux village, huts covered with snow, sledges and a kayak. Men and women are very cleverly modelled, while a fox, a penguin and a willow grouse are carved in walrus ivory. The whole production

is executed very prettily, and speaks volumes for the artistic capacity inherent in these natives of the Arctic regions.

When his lease of Knebworth expired, he purchased Debden Hall, in Essex. In 1905 he acquired the famous Black Corries estate of Glencoe, one of the finest grouse and deer preserves in the Highlands.

Black Corries formerly belonged to the chiefs of Glencoe, but passed from the representatives of the massacred Macdonalds after the rising of '45. It extends to Rannoch and Black Mount, a distance of some 25 miles, and adjoins the estates of Sir John Stirling Maxwell, M.P., Sir N. Menzies, Lord Breadalbane, and others. The famous massacre that inspired Macaulay's reference took place in 1691. That the character of the scenery suggests dark deeds is confirmed by Charles Dickens, who described this part of Argyllshire as " perfectly terrible."

In London Lord Strathcona was a familiar figure at the Athenæum Club in Pall Mall. Here he met some of the most eminent figures of the day, and in one of its handsome dining-rooms he delighted to gather together distinguished men to meet Canadians of high rank on a visit to the Mother Country.

" I shall always," said a Canadian at his death, " remember the last Dominion Day dinner which I attended. While the veteran statesman was speaking, although by reason of his great age his words were only audible to those at his own table, there prevailed what I can best describe as a ' mighty hush ' amongst the five hundred diners. As a Canadian at my table remarked at the speech, ' Although we cannot hear it, you can bet your last dollar that it is well worth listening to by those who can.' "

He was fond of stories of his Scottish countrymen, of which he recalled a large number. One which pleased him highly I have heard him often repeat. A Scot was once boasting that Scotch apples were far better than the Canadian variety. " Really ! " exclaimed his friend. "You can't

mean that!" "I do mean it," was the response; "but I must premeese that for my ain taste I prefer them sour and hard."

He was rarely ironical or patronising. On one occasion in 1887, Mr. Edward Blake made merry over Mr. Smith's glowing picture of the future North-West. The member for Montreal rose and said gravely:

> The leader of the opposition is very facetious, very facetious indeed. He spoke in a vein of engaging pleasantry, and I am sure we were all delighted to see him so condescend. Will he permit me to tell him that I think he would live more and more in the affections of his fellow-citizens if he would more frequently exhibit that milk of human kindness, that sympathy for his fellow-men, and that love of his country which is due from everyone who is a citizen of Canada.

Although he scarcely ever in his life was known to utter a forcible expression, on at least one occasion he acquiesced in one.

It was after the stormy campaign in 1880 in which he was defeated for Parliament by the late Colonel Scott. On the day of the election one of the Hudson's Bay Company employees, named Cole, who had involved himself in so many election bets, each of which had to be sealed by a drink, awoke from a doze in the open air to find his revered candidate, Mr. Smith, approaching. Cole staggered to his feet, and after a profuse exchange of courtesies, inquired how the election had gone. When the painful truth that he had been ignominiously defeated had been dragged from the member, his supporter's rage knew no bounds.

"The scoundrels!" he cried. "The —— —— —— scoundrels!"

The defeated member rubbed his hands and nodded his head benignantly. "Are they not, Mr. Cole?" he exclaimed. "Are they not?"

When he came to the High Commissionership the duties of secretary were being ably performed by Mr. Joseph

Grose Colmer, C.M.G., and to this gentleman and his successor, Mr. William Griffith, he gave the fullest confidence and loyalty. Repeatedly in his holograph correspondence with the Prime Minister occur testimonials to their zeal and ability and his desire that their services should be acknowledged in a practical manner. Even for those subordinates whom he had reason to suspect were not cordially disposed towards him, he was constantly exerting his influence, and when these were criticised or attack he was ever offering an apology or defence.

As one Minister put it to me: "Lord Strathcona regarded his staff as if they were members of his own family, and could not bear to have a word said against them."

"Nothing," Mr. Colmer bears testimony, "was too insignificant for his personal attention. It was a favourite saying of his that 'what you have to do is worth doing well,' and that axiom was the key-note of his life. While not a great reader of current literature, he was essentially a well-informed man. How he acquired his knowledge was often a surprise. But he had the knack of making people whom he knew and with whom he came into contact talk on any subject which interested them and him, and in that way acquired information more or less at first hand. His memory for facts, figures and faces was phenomenal."

A characteristic trait of Lord Strathcona was his adhesion, to an advanced period of life, to old-fashioned epistolary methods. He long shrank from the use of an amanuensis or a typewriter as a breach of courtesy; the openings and subscriptions of his letters were patterned on the old Hudson's Bay model. Even the most official or lengthy letter he persisted in writing by hand, at an almost incredible cost in time and patience.

On one occasion, at least, considerable physical suffering was involved. He had had the misfortune twenty years ago, while in Scotland, to fracture one of the bones and

otherwise seriously injure his right wrist, necessitating complete disablement. His arm was put in splints, and while chafing under the restraint he seized the occasion to make a voyage to Canada via New York. In transit his arm became worse, the inflammation spread and he found himself unable to leave his berth. On his arrival at New York he was met by Sir William Van Horne, who found him in a very feverish and distressed state. Nevertheless, he insisted on accompanying his friend immediately through to Montreal, where he was induced to put himself in the care of a surgeon. What preyed upon his mind most was that he had a number of letters to answer, and in spite of his injured hand these must somehow be answered.

"But," urged his friend, "surely you can employ an amanuensis."

The proposition seemed repugnant to him.

"I've never done such a thing," he declared emphatically. "It would give great offence, I assure you. I have always written my letters myself, and I must do so now."

Albeit, after considerable expostulation, and upon a competent secretary being produced, he consented to try the experiment.

"But at least I must sign the letters," was his stipulation. "Put the pen between my fingers, and although it will perhaps be a little difficult and painful, I must certainly sign the letters myself."

So duly the letters were dictated, and when the sheets were brought to him the invalid begged to be left alone to consider them and affix his signature. A pen was fastened between two of his disengaged fingers, and a bottle of ink placed on the table. When a couple of hours or so later the secretary entered to take charge of the correspondence and dispatch it, it was found that to every letter had been added a postscript, scrawled slowly and painfully, explaining how and why the writer had been forced to

depart from his lifelong practice of manuscript and apologising for the same. "And in each case," concludes the narrator of the anecdote, "the postscript was longer than the body of the letter."

On one occasion leaving London hurriedly for Glencoe with an accumulation of work, he was prevailed upon to take with him a young secretary with whom he was personally unacquainted. Arriving at his Highland seat on Saturday evening, he looked forward to disposing of a number of pressing letters largely dealing with his various charities, so as to catch Monday morning's mail. On the Sunday morning, when he mentioned this intention to the secretary, the latter said:

"Oh, but, Lord Strathcona, I'm afraid I cannot do what you ask. I have *never* worked on the Sabbath."

For a moment Lord Strathcona seemed disconcerted. Then he said quietly:

"Say no more about it. Go and take a walk up the Glen."

Relieved at getting off so easily, the young man seized hat and stick and went for a delicious stroll, which he found so alluring that he did not return until near nightfall. Weary and footsore he ate a hearty supper and retired to bed. Promptly at midnight, when he was wrapped in the soundest slumber, he was aroused by a thunderous knock at his door. He sprang out of bed and encountered Lord Strathcona at the door, taper in hand and a winning smile on his face.

"Come, Mr. Blank—the Sabbath is now over and we must make haste with those letters, you know, so as to catch the morning mail."

It only remains to add that by dint of incessant industry the morning sun had not risen very high over the vale of Glencoe when the letters were finally dispatched and Mr. Blank, a sadder and wiser man, once more sought his couch to snatch a couple of hours repose before breakfast.

It cannot be said that he was an easy taskmaster. Generally speaking, none in his employ held a sinecure: but at least he asked none to do that which he was not ready to do himself. And idleness was a fault he found it hardest to condone.

The main sources of Lord Strathcona's wealth have already been revealed in these pages. He left, at his death, a fortune amounting to several millions, the bulk of which—after the payment of various legacies amounting to nearly £1,000,000 sterling—was left in trust to his daughter, who succeeded him in the title.

A clear judgment and lofty purpose marked his great public benefactions, which were chiefly directed to educational and patriotic ends, or to the relief of suffering. The total amount of his donations exceeded a million and a half sterling. The principal ones in his lifetime may be thus enumerated:

King Edward's Hospital Fund	£200,000
Cost of raising Strathcona's Horse	200,000
Royal Victoria College for Women, Montreal	200,000
Royal Victoria Hospital, Montreal, (with Lord Mount Stephen)	200,000
Royal Victoria Hospital Endowment	200,000
McGill University, Montreal	410,000
Yale University	100,000
Victoria Hospital (Restoring after Fire)	50,000
Aberdeen University	35,000
Queen's University, Kingston	20,000
Queen Alexandra's Unemployed Fund	10,500

Those of a more private nature, which were almost endless, were made with a kindness and sympathy which won for him much personal affection.

The following is a highly characteristic anecdote related by his solicitor, Mr. Garson:

"I was running over the stubs of a cheque-book with Lord Strathcona," said Mr. Garson, "checking up various items, when I came across the record of a cheque for one

hundred pounds made out to a man whom I knew to be an unworthy person.

"Calling Lord Strathcona's attention to it, I expressed my surprise, but, as he made no comment, I said nothing more, and continued running through the stubs of the cheque-book.

"To my amazement, I shortly came across another cheque for the same amount made out to the same individual. This time I ventured to suggest to Lord Strathcona that the man's reputation did not justify confidence in him, and that if he desired an investigation I believed the reputation would be amply borne out by specific evidence. I waited for a reply, but he still kept silence, and I went on looking over the stubs.

"Finally I came across a third cheque for the same amount to the order of the same individual. When I called his attention to it, he said in his quiet way: 'Well, Garson, if one in twenty is worthy——'"

* * * * * *

Upon the lesson furnished by his character in this our age, when national complacence, indolence and luxury have had need of the fiery corrective of war, I need not dwell. Industry had with him a sleepless, inward monitor. Frugality was a habit, yet conjoined to a benevolence which could never rest until those around him were happy. Duty was a passion. Thoroughness, a sense of personal responsibility and a personal dignity were salient traits in the character of a man ever "scorning delights to live laborious days."

Yet to us, we should cherish above all and beyond all the feeling he had for Canada—a feeling helped by the consciousness that he had assisted in her development. It was akin to the pride of an engineer in the powerful mechanism he has helped to forge and assemble fragment by fragment, and who later beholds it tirelessly respond to his functioning.

Conclusion

With his last breath he served the Dominion. The people of our country have confronting them daily in their streets and railways and banks, their schools and hospitals, their shops, their public works, their parks and their homesteads, if this story of his career had never been written, abundant reasons for holding in perpetual reverence the name of STRATHCONA.

* * * * * *

So, in the words of the Canadian poet, Wilfred Campbell :

Let not the seethe of this rude hasting hour,
And the mad moment's futile, petty span,
Thrust into dull Oblivion's vasty black
All memory of this man
Who ever stood for Empire's widening dream,

* * * * * *

Whose whole, strong, failure-conquering life
Was one rebuke, for ever calling men
From coward despair, effeminate doubts and fears
To those firm highways of the great ones gone.

APPENDICES

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

THE GRANTS OF MANCHESTER

THE story of the Grants of Manchester, to whom reference is made in Chapter I., is truly romantic.

William Grant, the elder, at one time occupied the farm of "The Haugh" at Elchies, in Knockando, adjoining that of his first cousin, Alexander Smith, Lord Strathcona's father. Grant was engaged in the precarious trade of "droving"—i.e. buying cattle in the country, and taking them south for sale. The years 1782–83 were notably bad seasons; and in the latter year Grant made an abortive journey with a drove to Falkirk, where he failed to sell. Undaunted, he pressed on across the Border into Lancashire. Still, however, he found no market. Footsore and weary, he passed the night with his son William on top of a high hill. In the morning he sprang up, and, overlooking the fair valley of the Irwell bathed in sunshine, cried out: "Ah, this is paradise! Here I would like to have my home."

"Vain," Dr. Forsyth has written, "as the wish seemed to this poor Highlander, a stranger in a strange yet beautiful land, yet it was to prove true. In this very spot he and his family settled, and by honest industry built up a huge business, that ranked them amongst the merchant princes of Manchester."

William Grant, junior, one of the originals of Dickens's "Cheeryble Brothers," once wrote a letter to a friend, giving some interesting particulars of the family's beginnings in Manchester. "My father," he said, "was a dealer in cattle, and lost his property in the year 1783. He got a letter of introduction to Mr. Arkwright (afterwards Sir Richard and owner of one of the only two mills in Manchester), and came by way of Skipton to Manchester, accompanied by me. . . . We called upon Mr. Arkwright, but he had so many applications at the time he could not employ him. My father then applied to a Mr. Dinwiddie, a Scotch gentleman, who knew him in his prosperity, and who was a printer and manufacturer near Bury. He agreed to give my father employment, and placed my brother James and

me in situations where we had an opportunity of acquiring a knowledge both of manufacturing and printing (cotton), and offered me a partnership when I had completed my apprenticeship. I declined this offer, and commenced business for myself on a small scale, assisted by my brothers, John, Daniel and Charles.

"In 1818 we purchased Springside, and in 1827 we purchased the Park estate, and erected a monument to commemorate my father's visit to this valley on the very spot where he and I stood admiring the beautiful scenery below. We attribute much of our prosperity," the writer added, "under Divine Providence, to the good example and good courage of our worthy parents." And, indeed, their mother, Mrs. Grant, *née* Mackenzie, was a woman of rare character and piety, as also was her sister, Lord Strathcona's grandmother. "As a matter of fact," the Rev. Mr. Elliot has testified, "that mother's word or wish, to the end of her days, was the law of her sons."

APPENDIX B

THE FENIAN MOVEMENT

THE first society formed in the United States for purposes hostile to Great Britain appears to have been the "Irish Republican Union."

The course of affairs in Ireland prevented the Irish Republican Union from carrying out any projects which it may have entertained, and it was succeeded in 1855 by the "Massachusetts Irish Emigrant Aid Society," which held its first convention in Boston, on August 14th of that year, and under whose auspices secret societies were established in different parts of the United States.

These secret societies continued under different names, until in 1859 they were reconstituted as the "Phœnix Society." The Civil War interrupted their progress, but in 1863 they again prominently appeared as the "Fenian Brotherhood" at a public meeting held at Chicago of that year.

A Congress of the Fenian Brotherhood met at Philadelphia on October 17th, 1865, and resolved upon the issue of "Fenian Bonds," and the establishment of the Irish Republic at New York. The "Head Centre," as he was previously called, of the Brotherhood, was now styled "President of the Irish Republic"; the Executive Council entitled themselves "Senators," with a president; a house was hired at a rental of $1,200; Secretaries of the Treasury, of War, etc., were appointed; and the Irish Republic was declared to be founded at New York. The bonds had been prepared for the Fenians by the "Continental Bank Note Company, New York," and were

stamped " Office of the Secretary of Treasury." They were decorated with some emblems, and inscribed :—

> " It is hereby certified that the Irish Republic is indebted to ..... or bearer, in the sum of .... dollars, redeemable six months after the acknowledgment of the Independence of the Irish Nation, with interest from the date thereof inclusive at 6 per cent. per annum, payable on presentation of this bond at the Treasury of the Irish Republic."

As a measure of precaution against the possible hostile incursions of Fenians which were being constantly threatened, the Canadian Government was compelled to call out for active service nine companies of the Provincial Militia in November, 1865, and to station them along the most exposed parts of the frontier.

On January 2nd, 1866, a Fenian Convention was held at New York which lasted for nine days, and at which a detachment of the 99th State Militia, numbering twenty-two men, are stated to have acted as sentinels.

APPENDIX C

FUR OR LAND ?

A PROPOS the abrogation of the Deed Poll between the Hudson's Bay Company in London and its wintering partners, and the vexed question as to what compensation the latter were entitled, it is now abundantly clear that Lord Strathcona—who strove so earnestly to settle this question—was not himself blind to the potential value of the land in the north-west, even in 1870. The difficulty was to induce the factors generally to accept compensation in the form of land rather than money. As an illustration of how his attitude continues to be misunderstood, a prominent Chief Factor stated at Lord Strathcona's death :

> " In 1870, Sir Stafford Northcote and Sir Curtis Lampson frankly admitted, as did Secretary W. G. Smith and Assistant-Secretary W. Armit, that the fur-trade had a 40 per cent. interest in the fifty thousand acres around the posts, and in the posts and establishments themselves. Had this important asset been retained, the service would have been one of the most remunerative in Canada ! Mr. Smith's own Labrador and Gulf of St. Lawrence land experience made him all the readier to agree with some of the older partners of 1870, to get a little more money at once, rather than wait for further

settlement developments in which like a few they didn't believe. And thus we lost terribly. Had Mr. Smith, however, been brought up in the Northern Department, as was Governor Mactavish, Joseph Wilson, and other Chief Factors and Chief Traders, he would assuredly have been as staunch for all land rights as anyone."

APPENDIX D

THE SESSION OF 1878

THE close of the session of 1878 in the Dominion Parliament was marked and marred by a "disgraceful scene in the House," when—see Chap. XVII., pp. 393 *et seq.*—Sir Donald Smith was violently attacked by Sir Charles Tupper and Sir John Macdonald. The following is a description of the scene, taken from the *Toronto Globe*, May 11th, 1878:

"Mr. Donald A. Smith, after answering an attack made upon him by Sir John A. Macdonald, last night, began to reply to the slanders Dr. Tupper circulated in regard to him during the last picnic campaign. But the honourable member for Cumberland (Dr. Tupper) raised the point of order that Mr. Smith had no right to refer to this question in the closing hours of the session when he could have brought the matter up at any time during the past three months.

"The Speaker decided that the member for Selkirk was in order, and Dr. Tupper commenced to interrupt Mr. Smith in the most unseemly fashion. Mr. Smith kept his temper well, and in a few well-chosen sentences showed conclusively the unfounded character of the charges brought against him. Finding the efforts of his colleague to shut down the honourable member for Selkirk unavailing, Sir John A. Macdonald came to the rescue, and for several seconds the leader of the Opposition and his right bower made the Chamber ring with epithets of an ungentlemanly character, Mr. Speaker trying in vain to keep them within bounds.

"In the midst of the confusion Black Rod was admitted, and with difficulty delivered His Excellency's message summoning the Commons to the Senate Chamber. No sooner had the Sergeant-at-Arms shouldered the Mace and the Speaker begun to descend from the Chair than Dr. Tupper and Sir John renewed their rowdy conduct. A rush was made for Mr. Smith, and it was feared that blows were about to be exchanged. The Speaker called out to the Sergeant-at-Arms to arrest the disorderly members, an order which could only refer to Sir John A. Macdonald, Dr. Tupper, and Mr. Rochester,

who was with difficulty restrained from striking Mr. Smith. The noise and disorder continued, the Speaker being unable to leave the House on account of the riotous throng around the door.

"After the lapse of a few minutes, during which the scene of confusion was simply indescribable, another order was given for the arrest of the turbulent members, but by this time the ringleaders had either exhausted their fury, or had awakened to the consequences of their indecent behaviour, since they made for the lobby with commendable speed, and allowed the Speaker to pass on to the Senate Chamber.

"A more disorderly scene was never witnessed in Parliament, and the country cannot but condemn the conduct of those who so far forgot their dignity as to make a bear-garden out of the House of Commons of Canada."

APPENDIX E

FUR TRADE COMMISSIONS

From the Coalition in 1821 to 1905, when the last fur-trade commission was issued, the number of commissions issued by the Hudson's Bay Company was :—

5	Inspecting Chief Factorships.
103	Chief Factorships.
38	Factors.
208	Chief Traders.
62	Junior Traders.
416	Total.

During this period 262 received (so far as can be ascertained) promotion in the service. A calculation of the "Imperial relationship" yields the following interesting result :—

55	of the wintering partners	were	of	English birth or extraction.
16	,,	,,	,,	,,	Irish birth or extraction.
11	,,	,,	,,	,,	French-Canadian birth or extraction.
110	,,	,,	,,	,,	Highland and Canadian Scottish birth or extraction.
70	,,	,,	,,	,,	Acadian and Lowland Scottish birth or extraction.
262	Total.				

read Orcadian.

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